



*Deane sculp.*

EDW<sup>d</sup> YOUNG L.L.D.

Glasgow Printed for Rich<sup>d</sup> Scott Argyle Street 1798.

The  
COMPLAINT  
OR  
Bright Thoughts  
on Life Death & Immortality  
by EDW<sup>d</sup> YOUNG L.L.D.  
*With the Life of the Author*  
Vol. I.



GLASGOW Deane & Co.  
Printed for Rich<sup>d</sup> Scott Argyle Street.  
1798.





*W. Phillips*

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## MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

DR. EDWARD YOUNG,

COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS AS  
WELL AS PRIVATE FRIENDS.



**E**DWARD YOUNG, L. L. D. Author of the Night Thoughts, and many other excellent Pieces, was the only son of Dr. Edward Young, an eminent, learned, and judicious Divine, Dean of Sarum, Fellow of Winchester College, and Rector of Upham, in Hampshire. He was born in the year 1684, at Upham; and, after being educated in Winchester College, was chosen on the Foundation of New College at Oxford, October 13, 1703, when he was nineteen years of age; but being superannuated\*, and there being no vacancy of a fellowship, he removed before the expiration of the year to *Corpus Christi*, where he entered himself a Gentleman Commoner.

\* Disqualified on account of his years.

IN 1708, he was put into a law fellowship, at All Souls, by Archbishop Tennison. Here he took the degree of B C. L. in 1714, and, in 1719, D. C. L. In this year he published his Tragedy of Buziris; in 1721, the Revenge; and, in 1723, the Brothers: About this time he published his elegant poem on the Last Day, which being wrote by a Layman, gave the more satisfaction. He soon after published the Force of Religion, or Vanquish'd Love, a poem, which also gave much pleasure, to most who read it, but more especially to the noble family for whose entertainment it was principally written. Some charge the Author with a stiffness of versification in both these poems; but they met with such success as to procure him the particular friendship of several of the nobility, and among the rest the patronage of the Duke of Wharton, which greatly helped him in his finances. By his Grace's recommendation, he put up for member of parliament for Cirencester \*, but did not succeed. His noble patron honoured him with his company to All Souls; and, through his instance and persuasion, was at the expence of erecting a considerable part of the new buildings then carrying on in that college. The turn of his mind leading him to divinity, he quitted the law, which he had never practised, and taking orders, was appointed chaplain in ordinary to King George II. April 1728.

IN that year he published a Vindication of Providence, in quarto, and soon after his Estimate of Human

\* He was naturally of an ambitious temper and disposition.

Life, in the same size, which have gone through several editions in 12mo, and thought by many to be the best of his prose performances. In 1730, he was presented by his college to the Rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire, reputed worth 300*l.* a year, besides the Lordship of the Manor annexed to it. He was married in 1731 to Lady Betty Lee, widow of Colonel Lee, and daughter to the Earl of Litchfield, (a lady of an eminent genius and great poetical talents), who brought him a son and heir not long after their marriage.

THOUGH always in high esteem with many of the first rank, he never rose to great preferment. He was a favourite of the late Prince of Wales, his present Majesty's father; and, for some years before his death, was a pretty constant attendant at Court; but, upon the Prince's decease, all his hopes of farther rising in the church were at an end; and, towards the latter part of his life, his very desire of it seemed to be laid aside; for in his *Night Thoughts*, he observes, that there was one, (meaning himself), in Britain born, with courtiers bred, who thought even wealth might come a day too late; however, upon the death of Dr. Hales, in 1761, he was made Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager of Wales.

ABOUT the year 1741, he had the unhappiness to lose his wife, and both her children, which she had by her first husband; a son and a daughter, very promising characters. They all died within a short time of each other: That he felt greatly for their loss, as well as for that of his lady, may easily be perceived by his fine poem of the *Night Thoughts*, occasioned by it. This was a species

of poetry peculiarly his own, and has been unrivalled by all who have attempted to copy him. His applause here was deservedly great. The unhappy Bard, "whose griefs in melting numbers flow, and melancholy joys diffuse around," has been often sung by the profane as well as pious. They were written, as before observed, under the recent pressure of his sorrow for the loss of his wife, and his daughter and son-in-law; they are addressed to Lorenzo, a man of pleasure, and the world, and who, it is generally supposed, (and very probably), was his own son, then labouring under his father's displeasure. His son-in-law is said to be characterized by Philander; and his daughter was certainly the person he speaks of under the appellation of Narcissa: See Night 3. l. 62. In her last illness he accompanied her to Montpellier, in the south of France, where she died soon after her arrival in the city \*.

AFTER her death it seems she was denied Christian burial †, on account of being reckoned a heretic, by the inhabitants of the place; which inhumanity is justly resented in the same beautiful poem; See Night 3, line 165; in which his wife also is frequently mentioned;

\* She died of a consumption, occasioned by her grief for the death of her mother.

† The Priests refusing the Doctor leave to bury his daughter in one of their church-yards, he was obliged, with the assistance of his servant, to dig a grave in a field near Montpellier, where they deposited the body without the help of any of the inhabitants, who consider protestants in the same light as they do brutes.



and he thus laments the loss of all three in an apostrophe to death:

- ‘ Infatiate Archer! could not *one* suffice?  
 ‘ Thy Shaft flew *thrice*, and thrice my Peace was slain;  
 ‘ And thrice, ere thrice yon Moon had fill’d her Horn.’

HE wrote his Conjectures on Original Composition when he was turned of 80: If it has blemishes mixed with its beauties, it is not to be wondered at, when we consider his great age, and the many infirmities which generally attend such an advanced period of life. However, the many excellent remarks this work abounds with make it justly esteemed as a brightening before death: The Resignation, a poem, the last and least esteemed of all Dr. Young’s works, was published a short time before his death, and only served to manifest the taper of genius, which had so long shone with peculiar brightness in him, was now glimmering in the socket. He died in his Parsonage-house, at Welwyn, April 12th, 1765, and was buried, according to his own desire, (attended by all the poor of the parish), under the altar-piece of that church, by the side of his wife †. This altar-piece is reckoned one of the most curious in the kingdom, being adorned with an elegant piece of needle-work by the late Lady Betty Young ‡.

† The bell did not toll at his funeral, nor was any person allowed to be in mourning.

‡ In the middle of it are inscribed these words, “ I am the bread of life.” On the north side of the chancel is this inscription, as supposed by the Doctor’s orders,

BEFORE the Doctor died, he ordered all his manuscripts to be burnt. Those that knew how much he expressed in a small compass, and that he never wrote on trivial subjects, will lament both the excess of his modesty (if I may so term it) and the irreparable loss to posterity; especially when it is considered, that he was the intimate acquaintance of Addison, and was himself one of the writers of the Spectator.

IN his lifetime he published two or three sermons, one of which was preached before the House of Commons. — He left an only son and heir, Mr. Frederic Young, who had the first part of his education at Winchester school, and became a scholar upon the Foundation; was sent, in consequence thereof, to New College in Oxford; but there being no vacancy, (though the Society waited for one no less than two years), he was admitted in the mean time in Baliol College, where he behaved so imprudently as to be forbidden the College. This misconduct disoblged his father so much, that he never would suffer him to come into his sight afterwards: However, by his will, he bequeathed to him, after a few legacies, his whole fortune, which was considerable.

As a Christian and Divine, he might be said to be an example of primeval piety: He gave a remarkable instance of this one Sunday, when preaching in his turn

“VIRGINIBUS—Increase in Wisdom and Understanding;” and opposite, on the south side, “PUERISQUE—and in favour with God and Man.”

See App. to Biog. Brit.

at St. James's; for, though he strove to gain the attention of his audience, when he found he could not prevail, his pity for their folly got the better of all decorum; he sat back in the pulpit, and burst into a flood of tears.

THE turn of his mind was naturally solemn; and he usually, when at home in the country, spent many hours in a day walking among the tombs in his own church-yard: His conversation, as well as writings, had all a reference to a future life; and this turn of mind mixed itself even with his improvements in gardening: He had, for instance, an alcove, with a bench so well painted in it, that, at a distance, it seemed to be real, but, upon a nearer approach, the deception was perceived, and this motto appeared,

INVISIBILIA NON DECIPIUNT.

*The things unseen do not deceive us.*

Yet, notwithstanding this gloominess of temper, he was fond of innocent sports and amusements. He instituted an assembly and a bowling-green in his parish, and often promoted the mirth of the company in person. His wit was ever poignant \*, and always levelled at those who showed any contempt for decency and religion. His epigram, spoken *extempore* upon Voltaire, is well known:

\* In his last illness, a friend of the Doctor's calling to know how he did, and mentioning the death of a person, who had been in a decline a long time, said he was quite worn to a shell, by the time he died; very likely replied the Doctor, but what has become of the kernel?

Voltaire happening to ridicule Milton's allegorical personages of death and sin, Dr. Young thus addressed him:—

Thou art so witty, profligate and thin,  
Thou seem'st a Milton with his death and sin.

As to his character as a poet, his composition was instinct in his youth, with as much vanity as was necessary to excel in that art. He published a collection of such of his works as he thought the best, in 1761, in four volumes, in duodecimo; and another was published since. Among these, his satires, intitled, *The Love of Fame, or, The Universal Passion*, are by most considered as his principal performance. They are finely characteristic of that excessive pride, or rather folly, of following prevailing fashions, and aiming to be more than we really are, or can possibly be. They were written in early life; and, if smoothness of style, brilliancy of wit, and simplicity of subject, can ensure applause, our author may demand it on this occasion. After the death of his wife, as he had never given any attention to domestic affairs, so knowing his unsuitness for it, he referred the whole care and management of his family to his housekeeper, to whom he left a handsome legacy.

It is observed by Dean Swift, that if Dr. Young, in his satires, had been more merry or severe, they would have been more generally pleasing; because mankind are more apt to be pleased with ill nature and mirth than with solid sense and instruction. It is also observed of his *Night Thoughts*, that, though they are chiefly flights of

thinking almost super-human, such as the description of death, from his secret stand, noting down the follies of a Bacchanalian Society, the epitaph upon the departed world, and the issuing of Satan from his dungeon; yet these, and a great number of other remarkable fine thoughts, are sometimes overcast with an air of gloominess and melancholy \*, which have a disagreeable tendency, and must be unpleasing to a cheerful mind; however, it must be acknowledged by all, that they evidence a singular genius, a lively fancy, an extensive knowledge of men and things, especially of the feelings of the human heart, and paint, in the strongest colours, the vanity of life, with all its fading honours and emoluments, the benefits of true piety, especially in the views of death, and the most unanswerable arguments in support of the soul's immortality, and a future state.

G. W.

\* The Night Thoughts undoubtedly have their defects, as well as beauties; but it is generally allowed the latter are far more numerous, and so remarkably striking and conspicuous to the discerning Reader, as, in his view, to eclipse the failings which otherwise might be discovered therein.

Dr. YOUNG was convinced of the impropriety of writing the Night Thoughts in a style so much above the understanding of common Readers, and said to a friend, a week or two before he died, that was he to publish such another treatise, (respecting subjects), it should be in less elevated language, and more suited to the capacities of all.



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THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE FIRST.  
ON  
LIFE, DEATH,  
AND  
IMMORTALITY.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ARTHUR QNSLOW, Esq.  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.



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## P R E F A C E.



AS the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious; so the method pursued in it, was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind, on that occasion, than meditated, or designed. Which will appear very probable from the nature of it. For it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is from long narrations to draw short morals. Here, on the contrary, the narrative is short and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.



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THE  
COMPLAINT.

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NIGHT THE FIRST.

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TIRED nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep!  
He, like the world, his ready visit pays  
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:  
Swift on his downy pinions flies from woe,  
And lights on lids unfully'd with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose  
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!  
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.  
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams  
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought,  
From wave to wave of fancy'd misery,  
At random drove, her helm of reason lost:  
Tho' now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,  
(A bitter change!) severer for severe:  
The day too short for my distress; and night,  
Even in the zenith of her dark domain,  
Is sunshine, to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,  
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.  
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!

Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds;  
 Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse  
 Of life stood still, and nature made a pause,  
 An awful pause! prophetic of her end.  
 And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd:  
 Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence, and darkness! solemn sisters! twins  
 From ancient night, who nurse the tender thought  
 To reason, and on reason build resolve,  
 (That column of true majesty in man)  
 Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;  
 The grave, your kingdom: there this frame shall fall  
 A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.  
 But what are ye?—Thou, who didst put to flight  
 Primaeval silence, when the morning-stars,  
 Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;  
 O Thou, whose word from solid darkness struck  
 That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul;  
 My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,  
 As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Thro' this opaque of nature, and of soul,  
 This double night, transmit one pitying ray,  
 To lighten, and to cheer. O lead my mind,  
 (A mind that fain would wander from its woe,)  
 Lead it through various scenes of life and death;  
 And from each scene, the noblest truths inspire.  
 Nor less inspire my conduct, than my song;  
 Teach my best reason, reason my best will  
 Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve.  
 Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear:  
 Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd  
 On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.



The bell strikes one. We take no note of time,  
But from it loss. To give it then a tongue,  
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,  
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,  
It is the knell of my departed hours:  
Where are they? with the years beyond the flood.  
It is the signal that demands dispatch:  
How much is to be done? my hopes and fears  
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge  
Look down—On what? a fathomless abyss;  
A dread eternity! how surely mine!  
And can eternity belong to me,  
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,  
How complicate, how wonderful, is man?  
How passing wonder He, who made him such?  
Who center'd in our make such strange extremes?  
From different natures marvellously mixt,  
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!  
Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!  
Midway from nothing to the Deity!  
A beam ethereal, fully'd, and absorpt!  
Tho' fully'd, and dishonour'd, still divine!  
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!  
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!  
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!  
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,  
And in myself am lost! at home a stranger,  
Thought wanders up and down, surpriz'd, aghast,  
And wond'ring at her own: how reason reels!  
O what a miracle to man is man,  
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy, what dread!

Alternately transported, and alarm'd!  
 What can preserve my life? or what destroy?  
 An angel's arm can't snatch me from the graves;  
 Legions of angels can't confine me there.

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof:  
 While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread,  
 What tho' my soul phantastic measures trod  
 O'er fairy fields; or mourn'd along the gloom  
 Of pathless woods; or, down the craggy steep  
 Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool:  
 Or scal'd the cliff; or danc'd on hollow winds,  
 With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain?  
 Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature  
 Of subtler essence than the trodden clod;  
 Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,  
 Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.  
 Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal;  
 Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day.  
 For human weal, heav'n husbands all events;  
 Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore, that are not lost?  
 Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,  
 In infidel distress? Are angels there?  
 Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire?

They live! they greatly live a life on earth  
 Unkindled, unconceiv'd; and from an eye  
 Of tenderness, let heavenly pity fall  
 On me, more justly number'd with the dead.  
 This is the desert, this the solitude:  
 How populous, how vital, is the grave!  
 This is creation's melancholy vault,  
 The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;

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The land of apparitions, empty shades!  
All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond  
Is substance; the reverse is folly's creed;  
How solid all, where change shall be no more!

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,  
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.  
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and death,  
Strong death, alone can heave the massy bar,  
This gross impediment of clay remove,  
And make us embryos of existence free.  
From real life, but little more remote  
Is he, not yet a candidate for light,  
The future embryo, slumbering in his fire.  
Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,  
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,  
The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts;  
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.  
Prisoner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,  
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by heaven  
To fly at infinite; and reach it there,  
Where seraphs gather immortality,  
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.  
What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow  
In His full beam, and ripen for the just,  
Where momentary ages are no more!  
Where time, and pain, and chance, and death, expire?  
And is it in the flight of threescore years,  
To push eternity from human thought,  
And smother souls immortal in the dust?  
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,  
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,



Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,  
 At aught this scene can threaten, or indulge,  
 Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,  
 To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself.  
 How was my heart encrusted by the world!  
 O how self-fetter'd was my groveling soul!  
 How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round  
 In silken thought, which reptile fancy spun,  
 'Till darken'd reason lay quite clouded o'er  
 With soft conceit of endless comfort here,  
 Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend, (as sung above:)  
 Our waking dreams are fatal: how I dreamt  
 Of things impossible? (could sleep do more?)  
 Of joys perpetual in perpetual change?  
 Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave?  
 Eternal sunshine in the storms of life?  
 How richly were my noon tide-trances hung  
 With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys?  
 Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!  
 'Till at death's toll, whose restless iron tongue  
 Calls daily for his millions at a meal,  
 Starting I woke, and found myself undone.  
 Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?  
 The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall  
 Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me!  
 The spider's most attenuated thread  
 Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie  
 On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze.  
 O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!  
 Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!

A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.

Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,  
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,  
And quite unparadise the realms of light.

Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres;

The baleful influence of whose giddy dance  
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.

Here teems with revolutions every hour;  
And rarely for the better; or the best,  
More mortal than the common births of fate.

Each moment has its sickle, emulous  
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep  
Strikes empires from the root; each moment plays  
His little weapon in the narrower sphere  
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down  
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!  
Implicit treason to divine decree!

A bold invasion of the rights of heaven!  
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.

O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace!

What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine  
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.  
The sun himself by thy permission shines;  
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.

Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust

Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?

Why thy peculiar rancour wreck'd on me?

Wastate archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain;

And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

O Cynthia! why so pale? Dost thou lament  
 Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel  
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?  
 How wanes my borrow'd blifs? From fortune's smile,  
 Precarious courtesy! nor virtue's sure,  
 Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight.

In every vary'd posture, place, and hour,  
 How widow'd every thought of every joy!  
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!  
 Thro' the dark postern of time long claps'd,  
 Led softly, by the stilness of the night,  
 Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)  
 Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;  
 In quest of wretchedness perversely strays;  
 And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts  
 Of my departed joys; a numerous train!  
 I rue the riches of my former fate!  
 Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;  
 I tremble at the blessings once so dear;  
 And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one?  
 Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,  
 The single man? are angels all beside?  
 I mourn for millions: 'tis the common lot;  
 In this shape, or in that, has fate entail'd  
 The mother's throws on all of woman born,  
 Not more the children, than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,  
 Intestine broils, oppression, with her heart  
 Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.  
 God's image disinherited of day,  
 Here, plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made.

There, beings deathless as their haughty lord,  
 Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life;  
 And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.  
 Some, for hard masters, broken under arms,  
 In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,  
 Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour sav'd,  
 If so the tyrant, or his minion, doom.  
 Want, and incurable disease, (fell pair!) -  
 On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize  
 At once; and make a refuge of the grave:  
 How groaning hospitals eject their dead!  
 What numbers groan for sad admission there!  
 What numbers, once in fortune's lap high-sed,  
 Solicit the cold hand of charity!  
 To shock us more, solicit it in vain!  
 Ye sicken sons of pleasure! since in pains  
 You rue more modish visits, visit here,  
 And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce  
 Surfeit's dominion o'er you: but so great  
 Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone.  
 Not prudence can defend, or virtue save;  
 Disease invades the chastest temperance;  
 And punishment the guiltless; and alarm,  
 Thro' thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.  
 Man's caution often into danger turns,  
 And his guard falling, crushes him to death.  
 Not happiness itself makes good her name;  
 Our very wishes give us not our wish.  
 How distant oft the thing we doat on most,  
 From that for which we doat, felicity?  
 The smoothest course of nature has its pains;

And truest friends, thro' error, wound our rest.  
Without misfortune, what calamities?  
And what hostilities, without a foe?  
Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.  
But endless is the list of human ills,  
And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe  
Is tenanted by man? the rest a waste,  
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!  
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.  
Such is earth's melancholy map! But far  
More sad! this earth is a true map of man:  
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights  
To woe's wide empire; where deep troubles toss,  
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,  
Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,  
And threatening fate wide-opens to devour.

What then am I, who sorrow for myself?  
In age, in infancy, from others aid  
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind.  
That, nature's first, last lesson to mankind:  
The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels.  
More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts;  
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.  
Nor virtue, more than prudence, bids me give  
Sworn thought a second channel; who divide,  
They weaken too the torrent of their grief.  
Take then, O world! thy much indebted tear:  
How sad a sight is human happiness,  
To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!  
O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults!  
Would'st thou I should congratulate thy fate?



I know thou would'st, thy pride demands it from me.

Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,

The salutary censure of a friend.

Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;

By dottage dandled to perpetual smiles.

Know, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;

Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.

Misfortune, like a creditor severe,

But rises in demand for her delay:

She makes a scourge of past prosperity,

To sting thee more, and double thy distress.

Lorenzo, fortune makes her court to thee.

Thy fond heart dances, while the Syren sings.

Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;

I would not damp, but to secure thy joys.

Think not that fear is sacred to the storm.

Stand on thy guard against the smiles of fate.

Is heaven tremendous in its frowns? Most sure;

And in its favours formidable too:

Its favours here are trials, not rewards;

A call to duty, not discharge from care;

And should alarm us full as much as woes;

Awake us to their cause and consequence;

And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;

Awe nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,

Lest while we clasp, we kill them; nay, invert

To worse than simple misery, their charms.

Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,

Like bosom-friendships to resentment sour'd,

With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.

Beware what earth calls happiness; beware

All joys, but joys that never can expire.



Who builds on less than an immortal base,  
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine dy'd with thee, Philander! thy last sigh  
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchanted earth  
Lost all her lustre. Where, her glittering towers?  
Her golden mountains, where? all darken'd down  
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears:  
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece  
Of out-cast earth, in darkness! what a change  
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,  
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd  
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,  
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within,  
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,  
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd  
The worm to riot on that rose so red,  
Unfaded ere it fell; one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is conditionally wise;  
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,  
Oft, the first instant, its idea fair  
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye?  
The present moment terminates our sight;  
Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the next;  
We penetrate, we prophecy in vain.  
Time is dealt out by particles; and each,  
E'er mingled with the streaming sands of life,  
By fate's inviolable oath is sworn  
Deep silence, "Where eternity begins."

By nature's law, what may be, may be now;  
There's no prerogative in human hours.  
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,  
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?

Where is to-morrow? In another world.  
For numbers this is certain; the reverse  
Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,  
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,  
As on a rock of adamant, we build  
Our mountain-hopes; spin out eternal schemes,  
As we the fatal sisters could out-spin,  
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud;  
Nor had he cause; a warning was deny'd:  
How many fall as sudden, not as safe!  
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home,  
Of human ills the last extreme beware,  
Beware, Lorenzo! a slow-sudden death.  
How dreadful that deliberate surprize!  
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer;  
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;  
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life,  
Procrastination is the thief of time;  
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,  
And to the mercies of a moment leaves  
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.  
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?  
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears  
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"  
For ever on the brink of being born.  
All pay themselves the compliment to think  
They one day shall not drivel; and their pride  
On this reversion takes up ready praise;  
At least, their own; their future selves applauds;  
How excellent that life they near will lead!

Time lodg'd in their own hands is folly's vails;  
That lodg'd in fate's, to wisdom they consign;  
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone;  
'Tis not in folly, not to scorn a fool;  
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.  
All promise is poor dilatory man,  
And that through every stage: when young, indeed,  
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,  
Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,  
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.  
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;  
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;  
At fifty chides his infamous delay,  
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
In all the magnanimity of thought  
Resolves; and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? because he thinks himself immortal.  
All men think all men mortal, but themselves;  
Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate  
Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread;  
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,  
Soon close; where past the shaft, no trace is found:  
As from the wing no scar the sky retains;  
The parted wave no furrow from the keel;  
So dies in human hearts the thought of death.  
Even with the tender tear which nature sheds  
O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.  
Can I forget Philander? That were strange?  
O my full heart!—But should I give it vent,  
The longest night, though longer far, would fail,  
And the lark listen to my midnight song.

The sprightly lark's shrill morn'g wakes the morn;

Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,  
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer  
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,  
And call the stars to listen: every star  
Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.  
Yet be not vain; there are, who thine excel,  
And charm thro' distant ages: wrapt in shade,  
Prisoner of darkness! to the silent hours,  
How often I repeat their rage divine,  
To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!  
I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.  
Dark, though not blind, like thee, Maeonides!  
Or, Milton! thee; ah cou'd I reach your strain!  
Or his, who made Maeonides our own.  
Man too he sung: immortal man I sing:  
Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life!  
What, now, but immortality can please?  
O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track,  
Which opens out of darkness into day!  
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,  
Soar'd, where I sink, and sung immortal man!  
How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me?

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THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE SECOND.  
ON  
TIME, DEATH,  
AND  
FRIENDSHIP.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED  
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

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NIGHT THE SECOND.

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“WHEN the cock crew, he wept,”—smote by that eye  
Which looks on me, on all: that pow’r, who bids  
This midnight centinel, with clarion shrill,  
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,  
Rouze souls from slumber, into thoughts of heaven.  
Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?  
And fortitude abandon’d, where is man?  
I know the terms on which he sees the light:  
He that is born, is lifted: life is war,  
Eternal war with woe: who bears it best,  
Deserves it least.—On other themes I’ll dwell.  
Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee,  
And thine, on themes may profit; profit there,  
Where most thy need: themes too, the genuine growth  
Of dear Philander’s dust. He, thus, tho’ dead,  
May still befriend.—What themes? Times wond’rous price,  
Death, friendship, and Philander’s final scene.

So could I touch these themes, as might obtain  
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag’d,  
The good deed would delight me, half-impress  
On my dark cloud an Iris; and from grief

Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?  
 I know thou say'st it: Says thy life the same?  
 He mourns the dead, who lives as they desire.  
 Where is that thrift, that avarice of TIME,  
 (O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,  
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?  
 O time! than gold more sacred; more a load  
 Than lead, to fools; and fools reputed wise.  
 What moment granted man without account?  
 What years are squander'd, wisdom's debt unpaid?  
 Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.  
 Haste, haste! he lies in wait, he's at the door,  
 Insidious death! should his strong hand arrest,  
 No composition sets the prisoner free.  
 Eternity's inexorable chain

Fast binds; and vengeance claims the full arrears.

How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late  
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!

That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe;

Fain would I pay thee with eternity:

But ill my genius answers my desire;

My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.

Accept the will;—that dies not with my strain.

For what calls thy disease, Lorenzo? Not  
 For Esculapian, but for moral aid.

Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.

Youth is not rich in time; it may be, poor:

Part with it as with money, sparing; pay

No moment, but in purchase of its worth;

And what its worth, ask death-beds; they can tell,

Part with it as with life, reluctant; big

With holy hope of nobler time to come;

Time higher-aim'd, still nearer the great mark  
Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?  
(These heaven benign in vital union binds)  
And sport we like the natives of the bough,  
When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns  
Man's great demand: to trifle is to live;  
And is it then a trifle, too, to die?

Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo! 'tis confess.  
What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?  
Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?  
Is it not treason to the soul immortal,  
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?  
Will toys amuse, when med'cines cannot cure?  
When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes  
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,  
(As lands, and cities with their glittering spires,  
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm  
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there)  
Will toys amuse? No: thrones will then be toys,  
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time?—its loss we dearly buy.  
What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?  
He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads  
The straw like trifles on life's common stream.  
From whom those blanks, and trifles, but from thee?  
No blank, no trifle, nature made, or meant.  
Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine:  
This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves  
No trifle, and no blank in time:  
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;  
This, the blest art of turning all to gold;



This, the good heart's prerogative to raise  
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours.  
 Immense revenue! every moment pays.  
 If nothing more than purpose in thy power;  
 Thy purpose firm, is equal to the deed:  
 Who does the best his circumstance allows,  
 Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.  
 Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint;  
 'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer;  
 Guard well thy thought; our thoughts are heard in heaven.

On all-important time, through every age,  
 Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd; the man  
 Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.

"I've lost a day,"——the prince who nobly cry'd,  
 Had been an emperor without his crown;  
 Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:  
 He spoke, as if deputed by mankind.  
 So should all speak; so reason speaks in all;  
 From the soft whispers of that God in man,  
 Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,  
 For rescue from the blessing we possess?  
 Time, the supreme!——time is eternity;  
 Pregnant with all eternity can give;  
 Pregnant with all that makes archangels sinile.  
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth  
 A power etherial, only not ador'd.

Ah! how unjust to nature, and himself,  
 Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!  
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,  
 We censure nature for a span too short;  
 That span too short, we tax as tedious too;  
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,

To lash the ling'ring moments into speed,  
 And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.  
 Art, brainless art! our furious charioteer,  
 (For nature's voice unstifled would recall)  
 Drives headlong tow'rd the precipice of death;  
 Death, most our dread! death thus more dreadful made;  
 O what a riddle of absurdity!  
 Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels;  
 How heavily we drag the load of life!  
 Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,  
 It makes us wander; wander earth around  
 To fly that tyrant, thought. As Atlas groan'd  
 The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.  
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement;  
 The next amusement mortgages our fields;  
 Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,  
 From hateful time if prisons set us free.  
 Yet when death kindly tenders us relief,  
 We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,  
 Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd:  
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)  
 Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
 And seems to creep, decrepit with his age;  
 Behold him, when past by; what then is seen,  
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?  
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,  
 Rueful, aghast! cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors, and these ills;  
 To nature just, their cause and cure explore.  
 Not short heaven's bounty, boundless our expence;  
 No niggard, nature; men are prodigals.  
 We waste, not use our time: we breathe, not live.

Time wasted is existence, us'd is life:  
And bare existence, man, to live ordain'd,  
Wrings, and oppresses with enormous weight.  
And why? since time was given for use, not waste,  
Enjoin'd to fly; with tempest, tide, and stars,  
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man;  
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure; waste, a pain;  
That man might feel his error, if unseen;  
And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;  
Not, blundering, split on idleness for ease.  
Life's cares are comforts; such by heaven design'd;  
He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.  
Cares are employments; and without employ  
The soul is on a rack; the rack of rest,  
To souls most adverse; action all their joy.

Here, then, the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;  
'Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.  
We rave, we wrestle with great nature's plan;  
We thwart the Deity! and 'tis decreed,  
Who thwart his will, shall contradict their own.  
Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves;  
Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;  
We push time from us, and we wish him back;  
Lavish of lustre, and yet fond of life;  
Life we think long, and short; death seek, and shun;  
Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,  
United jar, and yet are loth to part.

Oh the dark days of vanity! while here,  
How tasteless! and how terrible, when gone!  
Gone? they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still;  
The spirit walks of every day deceas'd;  
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.

Nor death, nor life, delight us. If time past,  
And time possessest, both pain us, what can please?  
That which the Deity to please ordain'd,  
Time us'd. The man who consecrates his hours  
By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,  
At once he draws the sting of life and death;  
He walks with nature; and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen: see next  
Time's nature, origin, importance, speed;  
And thy great gain from urging his career. —  
All sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,  
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing else  
Is truly man's; 'tis fortune's.—Time's a god.  
Thou hast ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence;  
For, or against, what wonders can he do!  
And will: to stand blank neuter he disdains.  
Not on those terms was Time (heav'n's stranger!) sent  
On his important embassy to man.  
Lorenzo! no: on the long destin'd hour,  
From everlasting ages growing ripe,  
That memorable hour of wond'rous birth,  
When the DREAD SIRE, on emanation bent,  
And big with nature, rising in his might,  
Call'd forth creation, (for then Time was born,)  
By Godhead streaming through a thousand worlds;  
Not on those terms, from the great days of heaven,  
From old Eternity's mysterious orb,  
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies;  
The skies, which watch him in his new abode,  
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres,  
That horologe machinery divine.  
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play,

Like numerous wings around him, as he flies;  
Or, rather, as unequal plumes, they shape  
His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,  
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,  
And join anew Eternity, his fire;  
In his immutability to nest,  
When worlds, that count his circles now, unhing'd,  
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush  
To timeless night, and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities  
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?  
Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done?  
Man flies from time, and time from man; too soon?  
In sad divorce, this double flight must end:  
And then, where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,  
Thy sports? thy pomps?—I grant thee, in a state  
Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud,  
Thy Parian tombs triumphant arch beneath.  
Has death his fopperies? then well may life  
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well array'd! ye lilies of our land!  
Ye lilies male! who neither toil, nor spin,  
(As sister lilies might) if not so wise  
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!  
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,  
Yourselfes most insupportable! for whom  
The winter rose must blow, the sun put on  
A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft  
Favonius, breathe still softer, or be chid;  
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,  
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!  
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem



One moment unamus'd, a misery  
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud  
For every bawble, drivell'd o'er by sense;  
For rattles, and conceits of every cast,  
For change of follies, and relays of joy,  
To drag your patient through the tedious length  
Of a short winter's day——say, fages! say,  
Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!  
How will you weather an eternal night,  
Where such expedients fail?

O treach'rous conscience! while she seems to sleep  
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with fyren song!  
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop  
On headlong appetite the slacken'd rein,  
And give us up to licence, unrecall'd,  
Unmark'd;——see, from behind her secret stand,  
The sly informer minutes every fault,  
And her dread diary with horror fills.  
Not the gross act alone employs her pen;  
She reconnoitres fancy's airy band,  
A watchful foe! The formidable spy,  
Lift'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp;  
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,  
And steals our embryos of iniquity.  
As all-rapacious usurers conceal  
Their doomfday-book from all-consuming heirs;  
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats  
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time;  
Unnoted, notes each moment misapply'd;  
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,  
Writes our whole history; which death shall read  
In every pale delinquent's private ear;

And judgment publish; publish to more worlds  
 Than this; and endless age in groans resound.  
 Lorenzo, such that sleeper in thy breast!  
 Such is her slumber and her vengeance such;  
 For slighted counsel; such thy future peace!  
 And think'st thou still thou can'st be wise too soon?

But why on time so lavish is my song?  
 On this great theme kind nature keeps a school,  
 'To teach her sons herself. Each night we die,  
 Each morn are born anew; each day, a life!  
 And shall we kill each day? if trifling kills;  
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain  
 Cry out for vengeance on us! time destroy'd  
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.  
 Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites,  
 Hell threatens; all exerts; in effort, all;  
 More than creation labours!—Labours more?  
 And is there in creation, what, amidst  
 This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,  
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—  
 Man sleeps; and man alone; and man, whose fate,  
 Fate irreversibile, entire, extreme,  
 Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulph  
 A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom  
 All else is in alarm; man, the sole cause  
 Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,  
 As the storm rock'd to rest.—Throw years away?  
 'Throw empires, and be blameless. Moments seize.  
 Heaven's on their wing; a moment we may wish,  
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid day stand still,  
 Bid him drive back his car, recall, retake  
 Fate's hasty prey: implore him, reimport

The period past, regive the given hour.  
Lorenzo, more than miracles we want;  
Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake;  
His ardour such, for what oppresses thee.  
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;  
That more than miracle the gods indulge;  
To day is yesterday return'd; return'd  
Full power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,  
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.  
Let it not share its predecessor's fate;  
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.  
Shall it evaporate in fume? fly off  
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?  
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?  
More wretched for the clemencies of heav'n?

Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where,  
You know him; he is near you: point him out:  
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow?  
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flow'rs?  
Your golden wings, now hov'ring o'er him, shed  
Protection; now are waving in applause  
To that blest son of foresight! lord of fate!  
That awful independent on to-morrow!  
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;  
Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile;  
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;  
That common, but opprobrious lot; past hours,  
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,  
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,  
All feeling of futurity benumb'd;  
All godlike passion for eternals quench'd;

All relish of realities expir'd;  
Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies;  
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;  
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;  
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust;  
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;  
Embruted every faculty divine;  
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world.  
The world, that gulph of souls, immortal souls,  
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire  
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there  
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters chang'd,  
Though we from earth; ethereal, they that fell  
Such veneration due, O man, to man.

Who venerate themselves, the world despise.  
For what, gay friend! is this escutcheon'd world.  
Which hangs out DEATH in one eternal night?  
A night, that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,  
And wraps our thought, at banquets, in the shroud.  
Life's little stage is a small eminence,  
Inch high the grave above; that home of man,  
Where dwells the multitude; we gaze around,  
We read their monuments, we sigh; and while  
We sigh, we sink; and are what we deplor'd;  
Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot!

Is death at distance? No: he has been on thee;  
And given sure earnest of his final blow.  
Those hours, which lately smil'd, where are they now?  
Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drown'd, all drown'd  
In that great deep, which nothing dissembogues;  
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.  
The rest are on the wing; how fleet their flight?

Already has the fatal train took fire;  
 A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;  
 The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours;  
 And ask them, what report they bore to heaven;  
 And how they might have borne more welcome news.  
 Their answers form what men experience call;  
 If wisdom's friend, her best; if not, worst foe.  
 O reconcile them! kind experience cries,  
 ' There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs;  
 ' The more our joy, the more we know it vain;  
 ' And by success are tutor'd to despair.'

Nor is it only thus, but must be so.  
 Who knows not this, though gray, is still a child.  
 Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,  
 Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou can'st not disengage,  
 Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?  
 Since, by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,  
 Light, as the summer's dust, we take in air  
 A moment's giddy flight, and fall again;  
 Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,  
 And sleep till earth herself shall be no more;  
 Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)  
 We, fore amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,  
 And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,  
 As man's own choice, (controuler of the skies!)  
 As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,  
 (O how omnipotent is time!) decrees;  
 Should not each warning give a strong alarm  
 Warning, far less than that of bosom torn  
 From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!



Should not each dial strike us as we pass,  
 Portentous, as the written wall, which struck,  
 O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,  
 Ere-while high-flush'd with insolence and wine?  
 Like that, the dial speaks; and points to thee,  
 Lorenzo! loth to break the banquet up.  
 ' O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee;  
 ' And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade.'  
 Its silent language such: nor need'st thou call  
 Thy Magi, to decypher what it means.  
 Know, like the Median, fate is in thy walls:  
 Dost ask, How? whence? Belfhazzar like, amaz'd?  
 Man's make encloses the sure seeds of death;  
 Life feeds the murderer: ingrate! he thrives  
 On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But, here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies:  
 That solar shadow, as it measures life,  
 It life resembles too: life speeds away  
 From point to point, though seeming to stand still.  
 The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth:  
 Too subtle is the movement to be seen;  
 Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.  
 Warnings point out our danger; gnomons, time:  
 As these are useless when the sun is set;  
 So those, but when more glorious reason shines.  
 Reason should judge in all; in reason's eye,  
 That sedentary shadow travels hard.  
 But such our gravitation to the wrong,  
 So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,  
 'Tis later with the wife, than he's aware.  
 A Wilmington goes slower than the sun;  
 And all mankind mistake their time of day;

Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown  
 In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,  
 We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.  
 We take fair days in winter, for the spring;  
 And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft  
 Man must compute that age he cannot feel,  
 He scarce believes he's older for his years.  
 Thus, at life's latest eve, we keep in store  
 One disappointment sure, to crown the rest;  
 The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On this, or similar, Philander! thou  
 Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue;  
 And strong, to wield all science, worth the name;  
 How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,  
 And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!  
 How often thaw'd, and shorten'd winter's eve,  
 By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth.  
 Best found, so sought; to the recluse more coy!  
 Thoughts disintangle passing o'er the lip;  
 Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,  
 Or kept to tye up nonsense for a song;  
 Song, fashionably fruitless; such as stains  
 The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires;  
 Chiming her fancies to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?  
 As bees mixt nectar draw from fragrant flow'rs,  
 So men from FRIENDSHIP, wisdom and delight;  
 Twins ty'd by nature, if they part they die.  
 Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad?  
 Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up, want air,  
 And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.  
 Had thought been all, sweet speech had been deny'd;

Speech, thought's canal! speech thought's criterion too!  
 Thought in the mine, may come forth gold or dross;  
 When coin'd in word, we know its real worth.  
 If sterling, store it for thy future use;  
 'Twill buy thee benefit; perhaps, renown.  
 Thought too, deliver'd, is the more possess;  
 Teaching, we learn; and giving, we retain  
 The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.  
 Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;  
 Speech burnishes our mental magazine;  
 Brightens, for ornament; and whets, for use.  
 What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lye,  
 Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,  
 And rusted in; who might have borne an edge,  
 And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech;  
 If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue?  
 'Tis thought's exchange, which, like th' alternate push  
 Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,  
 And defecates the student's standing pool.  
 In contemplation is his proud resource?  
 'Tis poor, as proud, by converse unsustain'd.  
 Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field;  
 Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit  
 Of due restraint; and emulation's spur  
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.  
 'Tis converse qualifies for solitude;  
 As exercise, for salutary rest.  
 By that untutor'd, contemplation raves;  
 And nature's fool, by wisdom is outdone.  
 Wisdom, tho' richer than Peruvian mines,  
 And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,  
 What is she, but the means of happiness?

That unobtain'd, than folly more a fool;  
A melancholly fool, without her bells.  
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives  
The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.  
Nature, in zeal for human amity,  
Denies, or damps, an undivided joy.  
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange; -  
Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two;  
Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluckt by one.  
Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give  
To social man true relish of himself.  
Full on ourselves descending in a line  
Pleasure's bright beam, is feeble in delight:  
Delight intense, is taken by rebound;  
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial happiness, whene'er she stoops  
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,  
And one alone, to make her sweet amends  
For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend;  
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,  
Each other's pillow to repose divine.  
Beware the counterfeit: in passion's flame  
Hearts melt; but melt like ice, soon harder froze.  
True love strikes root in reason; passion's foe:  
Virtue alone entenders us for life:  
I wrong her much——entenders us for ever.  
Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair  
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,  
And, emulously, rapid in her race.  
O the soft enmity! endearing strife!  
This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,  
And gives the rivet of eternity.

From friendship, which outlives my former themes,  
Glorious survivor of old time, and death!  
From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heavenly feed,  
The wise extract earth's most Hyblean bliss,  
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?  
Abroad they find, who cherish it at home.  
Lorenzo! pardon, what my love extorts,  
An honest love, and not afraid to frown.  
Tho' choice of follies fasten on the great,  
None clings more obstinate, than fancy fond,  
That sacred friendship is their easy prey;  
Caught by the wafure of a golden lure,  
Or fascination of a high-born smile.  
Their smiles, the great, and the coquet, throw out  
For others hearts, tenacious of their own;  
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.  
Ye fortune's cofferers! ye powers of wealth!  
You do your rent-rolls most felonious wrong,  
By taking our attachment to yourselves.  
Can gold gain friendship? impudence of hope!  
As well mere man an angel might beget.  
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.  
Lorenzo! pride repels; nor hope to find  
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.  
All like the purchase; few the price will pay;  
And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)  
I shew thee friendship delicate, as dear,  
Of tender violations apt to die?  
Reserve will wound it; and distrust, destroy.  
Deliberate on all things with thy friend:



But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,  
Nor every friend unrotten at the core;  
First, on thy friend, deliberate with thyself;  
Pause, ponder, sift; not eager in the choice,  
Nor jealous of the chosen; fixing, fix;  
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.  
Well, for thy friend; but nobler far for thee;  
How gallant danger for earth's highest prize?  
A friend is worth all hazards we can run.  
'Poor is the friendless master of a world:  
'A world in purchase for a friend is gain.'

So sung he (angels hear that angel sing!  
Angels from friendship gather half their joy)  
So sung Philander, as his friend went round  
In the rich ichor, in the gen'rous blood  
Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,  
A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.  
He drank long health, and virtue, to his friend;  
His friend, who warm'd him more, who more inspir'd.  
Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new  
(Not such was his) is neither strong, nor pure.  
O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,  
And elevating spirit, of a friend,  
For twenty summers ripening by my side:  
All feculence; of falsehood long thrown down;  
All social virtues rising in his soul;  
As crystal clear; and smiling, as they rise!  
Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight;  
Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.  
High-flavour'd bliss for gods! on earth how rare!  
On earth how lost!—Philander is no more.  
'Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song?

Am I too warm?—too warm I cannot be.  
I lov'd him much; but now I love him more.  
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half conceal'd,  
Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes  
Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold;  
How blessings brighten as they take their flight!  
His flight Philander took; his upward flight,  
If ever soul ascended. Had he dropt,  
(That eagle-genius!) O had he let fall  
One feather as he flew; I, then, had wrote,  
What friends might flatter; prudent foes forbear;  
Rivals scarce damn; and Zoilus reprieve.  
Yet what I can, I must: it were profane  
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,  
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.  
Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime,  
Momentous most to man, shou'd sleep unsung!  
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,  
Painim or Christian; to the blush of wit.  
Man's highest triumph! man's profoundest fall!  
The death-bed of the just! is yet undrawn  
By mortal hand: it merits a divine:  
Angels should paint it, angels ever there;  
There, on a post of honour, and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids;  
And glory tempts, and inclination calls—  
Yet am I struck; as struck the soul, beneath  
Aerial groves impenetrable gloom;  
Or, in some mighty ruin's solemn shade;  
Or, gazing by pale lamps on high-born dust,  
In vaults; thin courts of poor unflatter'd king's  
Or, at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.

It is religion to proceed: I pause——

And, enter, aw'd, the temple of my theme.

Is it his death-bed? No; it is his shrine:

Behold him, there, just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,

Is privileg'd beyond the common walk

Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.

Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,

Receive the blessing, and adore the chance,

That threw in this Bethesda your disease;

If unrestor'd by This, despair your cure.

For, here, resistless demonstration dwells;

A death-bed's a detector of the heart.

Here tir'd dissimulation drops her masque,

Through life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!

Here real, and apparent, are the same.

You see the man; you see his hold on heav'n;

If sound his virtue; as Philander's, sound.

Heav'n waits not the last moment, owns her friends

On this side death; and points them out to men,

A lecture, silent, but of sov'reign pow'r!

To vice, confusion; and to virtue, peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,

Virtue alone has majesty in death;

And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.

Philander! he severely frown'd on thee.

No warning given! unceremonious fate!

A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!

A wrench from all we love! from all we are!

A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque

Beyond conjecture! feeble nature's dread!

' Strong reason's shudder at the dark unknown!  
 ' A sun extinguish'd! a just opening grave!  
 ' And oh! the last, last; what? (can words express?  
 ' Thought reach?) the last, last—silence of a friend!  
 Where are those horrors, that amazement, where,  
 This hideous group of ills, which singly shock,  
 Demand from man?—I thought him man till now.

Thro' nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies,  
 (Like the stars struggling thro' this midnight gloom)  
 What gleams of joy! what more than human peace!  
 Where the frail mortal? the poor abject worm?  
 No, not in death, the mortal to be found.  
 His conduct is a legacy for all,  
 Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.  
 His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,  
 With unreluctant grandeur, gives, not yields  
 His soul sublime; and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene!  
 Whence, this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?  
 His God sustains him in his final hour!  
 His final hour brings glory to his God!  
 Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.  
 We gaze; we weep; mixt tears of grief and joy!  
 Amazement strikes! Devotion bursts to flame!  
 Christians adore! and Infidels believe.

As some tall tower, or lofty mountain's brow,  
 Detains the sun, illustrious from its height;  
 While rising vapours, and descending shades,  
 With damps, and darkness, drown the spacious vale:  
 Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,  
 Philander, thus, augustly rears his head,

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At that black hour, which gen'ral horror sheds  
On the low level of th' inglorious throng:  
Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,  
Divinely beam on his exalted soul;  
Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,  
With incommunicable lustre, bright.



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THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE THIRD.  
NARCISSE.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED  
TO HER GRACE  
THE DUCHESS OF P—

*Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.*

VIRG.

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THE  
COMPLAINT.

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NIGHT THE THIRD.

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FROM dreams, where thought in fancy's maze runs mad,  
To reason, that heaven-lighted lamp in man,  
Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,  
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,  
I keep my assignation with my woe.  
O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,  
Lost to the noble fallies of the soul!  
Who think it solitude to be alone.  
Communion sweet! communion large, and high!  
Our reason, guardian angel, and our God!  
Then nearest these, when others most remote;  
And all, ere long, shall be remote, but these.  
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,  
A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unapprov'd!  
Now woo them; wed them; bind them to thy breast;  
To win thy wish, creation has no more.  
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend——  
But friends, how mortal! dangerous the desire.  
Take Phoebus to yourselves, ye basking bards!  
Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain head,  
And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy;

Where sense runs savage, broke from reason's chain,  
 And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.  
 My fortune is unlike; unlike my song;  
 Unlike the deity my song invokes.

I to day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,  
 (Endymion's rival!) and her aid implore;  
 Now first implor'd in succour to the muse.

Thou, who didst lately borrow \* Cynthia's form,  
 And modestly forgo thine own! O thou,  
 Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!  
 Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song?  
 As thou her crescent, she thy character  
 Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute  
 This revolution in the world inspir'd?  
 Ye train Pierian! to the lunar sphere,  
 In silent hour, address your ardent call  
 For aid immortal; less her brother's right.  
 She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads  
 The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,  
 A strain for gods, deny'd to mortal ear.  
 Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of heaven!  
 What title, or what name, endears thee most?  
 Cynthia! Cyllene! Phoebe!—or dost hear  
 With higher gust, fair P——d of the skies?  
 Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,  
 More pow'rful than of old Circean charm?  
 Come; but from heavenly banquets with thee bring  
 The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear  
 The theft divine; or in propitious dreams

\* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.



(For dreams are thine) transfuse it thro' the breast  
Of thy first votary—but not thy last;

U, like thy name-fake, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be; kind on such a theme;

A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,

Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!

A theme that rose all-pale, and told my soul,

'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;

A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp,

Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.

Narcissa follows, ere his tomb is clos'd.

Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;

They love a train, they tread each other's heel;

Her death invades his mournful right, and claims

The grief that started from my lids for him:

Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,

Or shares it, ere it falls. So frequent death,

Sorrow, he more than causes, he confounds;

For human sighs his rival strokes contend,

And make distress, distraction. Oh Philander!

What was thy fate? a double fate to me;

Portent, and pain! a menace, and a blow!

Like the black raven hov'ring o'er my peace,

Not less a bird of omen, than of prey.

It call'd Narcissa long before her hour;

It call'd her tender soul, by break of bliss,

From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;

Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves

In this inclement clime of human life.

Sweet harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!

And young as beautiful! and soft as young!

And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!

And happy (if aught happy here) as good!  
 For fortune fond had built her nest on high.  
 Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,  
 Transfixt by fate (who loves a lofty mark)  
 How from the summit of the grove she fell,  
 And left it unharmonious! all its charm  
 Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!  
 Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,  
 Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain  
 (O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group  
 Of bright ideas, flow'rs of paradise,  
 As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,  
 Kneel, and present it to the skies; as all  
 We guess of heaven: and these were all her own;  
 And she was mine; and I was—was!—most blest,  
 Gay title of the deepest misery!  
 As bodies grow more pond'rous, robb'd of life;  
 Good lost weighs more in grief, than gain'd, in joy.  
 Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,  
 Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;  
 And if in death still lovely, lovelier there;  
 Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.  
 And will not the severe excuse a sigh?  
 Scorn the proud man that is asham'd to weep;  
 Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame.  
 Ye that e'er lost an angel! pity me.

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,  
 Dawning a dimmer day on human sight;  
 And on her cheek, the residence of spring,  
 Pale omen fate; and scatter'd fears around  
 On all that saw (and who would cease to gaze,

That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,  
 I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,  
 Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,  
 And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun  
 (As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,  
 Deny'd his wonted succour, nor with more-  
 Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells  
 Of lilies; fairest lilies not so fair.

Queen lilies! and ye painted populace!  
 Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives;  
 In morn and ev'ning dew, your beauties bathe,  
 And drink the sun; which gives your cheeks to glow,  
 And out-blush (mine excepted) ev'ry fair;  
 You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,  
 Which often crop'd your odours, incense meet  
 To thought so pure; her flow'ry state of mind  
 In joy unfall'n. Ye lovely fugitives!  
 Coeval race with man! for man you smile;  
 Why not smile at him too? you share indeed  
 His sudden pangs; but not his constant pain.

So man is made, nought ministers delight,  
 But what his glowing passions can engage;  
 And glowing passions, bent on aught below,  
 Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;  
 And anguish, after rapture, how severe!  
 Rapture! bold man! who tempts the wrath divine,  
 By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taste,  
 While here, presuming on the rights of heaven.  
 For transport dost thou call on ev'ry hour,  
 Lorenzo? At thy friends expence be wise;  
 Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart,  
 A broken reed, at best; but, oft, a spear;

On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.

Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her:—thought repell'd  
 Resenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry woe.

Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!

And when kind fortune, with thy lover, smil'd!

And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-op'ning joys!

And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete!

And on a foreign shore; where strangers wept!

Strangers to thee; and, more surprising still,

Strangers to kindness, wept: their eyes let fall

Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down

From marble hearts! obdurate tendernefs!

A tendernefs that call'd them more severe;

In spite of nature's soft persuasion, steel'd;

While nature melted, superstition rav'd;

That mourn'd the dead; and this deny'd a grave.

Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will!

Their will the tyger suck'd, outrag'd the storm.

For, oh! the curst ungodliness of zeal!

While sinful flesh relented, spirit nurs'd

In blind infallibility's embrace,

The fainted spirit petrify'd the breast;

Deny'd the charity of dust, to spread

O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.

What could I do? what succour? what resource?

With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole;

With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd;

Short in my duty; coward in my grief!

More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,

With soft-suspended step; and, muffled deep

In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.

I whisper'd what should echo thro' their realms;

Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.  
 Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,  
 While nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?  
 Pardon necessity, blest shade! of grief  
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;  
 Half-execration mingled with my prayer;  
 Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd;  
 Sore-grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;  
 Stamp'd the curst soil; and with humanity  
 (Deny'd Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.

Glow's my resentment into guilt! what guilt  
 Can equal violations of the dead?

The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust  
 Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!  
 This heav'n-assum'd majestic robe of earth,  
 He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse  
 With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold.  
 When ev'ry passion sleeps that can offend;  
 When strikes us ev'ry motive that can melt;  
 When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,  
 That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;  
 Then, spleen to dust? the dust of innocence;  
 An angel's dust?—This Lucifer transcends;  
 When he contended for the patriarch's bones,  
 'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;  
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race  
 Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love;  
 And uncreated, but for love divine;  
 And, but for love divine, this moment, lost,  
 By fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.  
 Man, hard of heart to man! of horrid things



Most horrid! 'mid stupendous, highly strange!  
 Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs;  
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,  
 And contumelious his humanity:  
 What then is vengeance? hear it not, ye stars!  
 And thou, pale moon! turn paler at the sound;  
 Man is to man the forest, surest ill.  
 A previous blast foretells the rising storm;  
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;  
 Volcano's bellow ere they disembody;  
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;  
 And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:  
 Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,  
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.  
 Is this the flight of fancy? would it were!  
 Heav'n's Sov'reign saves all beings but himself,  
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the muse? and let the muse be fir'd:  
 Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks, he feels,  
 And in the nerve most tender, in his friends?  
 Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;  
 He felt the truths I sing, and I in him,  
 But he, nor I, feel more; past ills, Narcissa!  
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!  
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;  
 Pangs num'rous, as the num'rous ills that swarm'd  
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there  
 Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,  
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.  
 Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)  
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?  
 An aspic, each; and all, an Hydra-woe.

What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—

Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?

This hoary cheek, a train of tears bedews;

And each tear mourns its own distinct distress;

And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands

Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.

A grief like this proprietors excludes:

Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;

They make mankind the mourner: carry sighs

Far as the fatal fame can wing her way,

And turn the gayest thought of gayest age,

Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.

The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,

Where darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,

With raven wing incumbent, waits the day

(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!

That subterranean world, that land of ruin!

Fit walk, Lorenzo, for proud human thought!

There let my thought expatiate; and explore

Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments,

Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.

For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,

My soul! 'The fruits of dying friends survey;

'Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;

'Give death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;

'And labour that first palm of noble minds,

'A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.'

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave.

As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood

Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r;

Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound,

And, first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?

Most horrid! 'mid stupendous, highly strange!  
 Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs;  
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,  
 And contumelious his humanity:  
 What then is vengeance? hear it not, ye stars!  
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 Man is to man the forest, surest ill.  
 A previous blast foretells the rising storm;  
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;  
 Volcano's bellow ere they disembogue;  
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;  
 And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:  
 Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,  
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.  
 Is this the flight of fancy? would it were!  
 Heav'n's Sov'reign saves all beings but himself;  
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the muse? and let the muse be fir'd:  
 Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks, he feels,  
 And in the nerve most tender, in his friends?  
 Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;  
 He felt the truths I sing, and I in him,  
 But he, nor I, feel more; past ills, Narcissa!  
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!  
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;  
 Pangs num'rous, as the num'rous ills that swarm'd  
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there  
 Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,  
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave,  
 Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)  
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?  
 An aspic, each; and all, an Hydra-woe.

What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—  
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?  
This hoary check, a train of tears bedews;  
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress;  
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands  
Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.  
A grief like this proprietors excludes:  
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;  
They make mankind the mourner: carry sighs  
Far as the fatal fame can wing her way,  
And turn the gayest thought of gayest age,  
Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.

The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,  
Where darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,  
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day  
(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!  
That subterranean world, that land of ruin!  
Fit walk, Lorenzo, for proud human thought!  
There let my thought expatiate; and explore  
Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments,  
Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.  
For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,  
My soul! 'The fruits of dying friends survey;  
'Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;  
'Give death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;  
'And labour that first palm of noble minds,  
'A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.'

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave.  
As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood  
Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r;  
Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound,  
And, first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?

THE COMPLAINT.

It brings us more than triple aid; an aid  
To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,  
To damp our brainless ardours; and abate  
That glare of life, which often blinds the wise.  
Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth  
Our rugged pass to death; to break those bars  
Of terror, and abhorrence, nature throws  
Cross our obstructed way; and, thus, to make  
Welcome, as safe, our port from ev'ry storm.  
Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume  
Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,  
Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,  
And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,  
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,  
Just skim earth's surface, ere we break it up,  
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,  
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends  
Are angels sent on errands full of love;  
For us they languish, and for us they die:  
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?  
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,  
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?  
Shall we disdain their silent, soft address;  
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?  
Senseless, as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,  
Tread under foot their agonies and groans;  
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;  
Give it its wholesome empire; let it reign,  
That kind chastiser of thy soul in joy!  
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,



And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast:  
Auspicious aera! golden days, begin!  
The thought of death, shall, like a god, inspire,  
And why not think on death? is life the theme  
Of ev'ry thought? and wish of ev'ry hour?  
And song of ev'ry joy? surprising truth!  
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.  
To wave the numerous ills that seize on life -  
As their own property, their lawful prey;  
The man has measur'd half his weary stage,  
His luxuries have left him no reserve,  
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights;  
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,  
And in the tasteless present chews the past;  
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.  
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years  
Have disinherited his future hours,  
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.  
Live ever here, Lorenzo!—Shocking thought!  
So shocking, they who wish, disown it too;  
Disown from shame, what they from folly crave.  
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?  
For what live ever here?—With lab'ring step  
To tread our former footsteps? Pace the round  
Eternal? To climb life's worn heavy wheel,  
Which draws up nothing new? To beat, and beat,  
The beaten track? To bid each wretched day  
The former mock? To surfeit on the same,  
And yawn our joys? or thank a misery  
For change, tho' sad? To see what we have seen?  
Hear, till unheard, the same old flabber'd tale?  
To taste the tasted, and at each return

Less tasteful? O'er our palates to decant  
 Another vintage? Strain a flatter year,  
 Thro' loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?  
 Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!  
 Ill-ground, and worse concocted! Load, not life!  
 'The rational foul kennels of excess!  
 Still streaming thorough-fares of dull debauch!  
 Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd!  
 So would they have it: elegant desire!  
 Why not invite the bellowing stalls, and wilds  
 But such examples might their riot awe.  
 'Thro' want of virtue, that is, want of thought,  
 (Tho' on bright thought they father all their flights)  
 'To what are they reduc'd? to love, and hate,  
 The same vain world; to censure, and espouse,  
 This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool,  
 Each moment of each day; to flatter bad  
 Thro' dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,  
 Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills,  
 And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,  
 And infamous for wrecks of human hope——  
 Scar'd at the gloomy gulph, that yawns beneath.  
 Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy!

'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.  
 This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?  
 One only; but that one, what all may reach;  
 Virtue——She, wonder-working goddess! charms  
 That rock to bloom; and tames the painted shrew;  
 And what will more surprize, Lorenzo! gives  
 'To life's sick, nauseous iteration, change;  
 And straitens nature's circle to a line.

Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo? lend an ear,  
A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden iteration reigns,  
And ever must, o'er those, whose joys are joys  
Of sight, smell, taste: the cuckow-seasons sing  
The same dull note to such as nothing prize,  
But what those seasons from the teeming earth,  
To doating sense indulge. But nobler minds, -  
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,  
Make their days various; various as the dyes  
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.  
On minds of dove-like innocence possess,  
On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,  
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves  
In that, for which they long; for which they live.  
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,  
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;  
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents  
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;  
While nature circle, like a chariot-wheel  
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,  
Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour;  
Advancing virtue, in a line to bliss;  
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!  
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone insure!

And shall we then, for virtue's sake, commence  
Apostates? and turn infidels for joy?  
A truth it is, few doubt, but fewer trust,  
'He sins against this life, who flights the next.'  
What is this life? how few their fav'rite know?  
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,  
By passionately loving life, we make

Lov'd life unlovely; hugging her to death.  
 We give to time eternity's regard;  
 And, dreaming, take our passage for our port.  
 Life has no value, as an end, but means;  
 An end deplorable! a means divine!  
 When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;  
 A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much:  
 Like some fair hum'rists, life is most enjoy'd,  
 When courted least; most worth, when disesteem'd;  
 Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;  
 In prospect richer far; important! awful!  
 Not to be mention'd, but with shouts of praise!  
 Not to be thought on, but with tides of joy!  
 The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?  
 Where now, Lorenzo! life's eternal round?  
 Have I not made my triple promise good?  
 Vain is the world; but only to the vain.  
 To what compare we then this varying scene,  
 Whose worth ambiguous rises, and declines?  
 Waxes, and wanes? (in all propitious, night  
 Assists me here) compare it to the moon;  
 Dark in herself and indigent; but rich  
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.  
 When gross guilt interposes, lab'ring earth,  
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;  
 Her joys, at brightest, pallid, to that font  
 Of full effulgent glory, whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant: Oh Lorenzo  
 A good man, and an angel these between  
 How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?  
 Perhaps a moment; or, perhaps a year;

Or, if an age, it is a moment still;  
 A moment, or eternity's forgot.  
 Then be, what once they were, who now are gods;  
 Be what Philander was, and claim the skies,  
 Starts timid nature at the gloomy pass?  
 The lost transition call it, and be cheer'd:  
 Such it is often, and why not to thee?  
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise;  
 And may itself procure, what it presumes.  
 Life is much flatter'd, death is much traduc'd;  
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.  
 'Strange competition!'—True, Lorenzo! strange!  
 So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust;  
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.  
 Thro' chinks, styl'd organs, dim life peeps at light;  
 Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day:  
 All eye, all ear, the disembod' d power.  
 Death has feign'd evils, nature shall not feel;  
 Life, ills substantial, wisdom cannot shun.  
 Is not the mighty mind, that son of heaven!  
 By tyrant life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?  
 By death enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd?  
 Death but entombs the body; life the soul.

'Is death then guiltless? How he marks his way  
 'With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!  
 'Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!  
 'With various lustres these light up the world,  
 'Which death puts out, and darkens human race.'  
 I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just.  
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!  
 Death humbles these; more barb'rous life, the man.



Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;  
Death, of the spirit infinite! divine!  
Death has no dread, but what frail life imparts;  
Nor life true joy, but what kind death improves.  
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give  
Far greater; life's a debtor to the grave,  
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life,  
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,  
To catter for the sense; and serve at boards,  
Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps  
Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.  
Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,  
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd!  
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death,  
Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,  
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,  
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,  
And eternize the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.  
What need I more? O death, the palm is thine.

Then welcome, death! thy dreaded harbingers,  
Age, and disease; disease, tho' long my guest;  
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life;  
Which, pluckt a little more, will toll the bell,  
That calls my few friends to my funeral;  
Where feeble nature drops, perhaps a tear,  
While reason and religion, better taught,  
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb  
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;  
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:  
Lust and ambition, wrath and avarice,  
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.

That ill's corrosive, cares importunate,  
Are not immortal too, O death! is thine.  
Our day of dissolution!—name it right;  
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich  
And ripe: what tho' the sickle, sometimes keen,  
Just scars us as we reap the golden grain?  
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.  
Birth's feeble cry, and death's deep dismal groan,  
Are slender tributes low-taxt nature pays  
For mighty gain; the gain of each, a life!  
But O! the last the former so transcends,  
Life dies, compar'd; life lives beyond the grave.

And feel I, death! no joy from thought of thee?  
Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires  
With ev'ry nobler thought, and fairer deed!  
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man!  
Death, the rewarder, who the rescu'd crowns!  
Death, that absolves my birth, a curse without it!  
Rich death, that realizes all my cares,  
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!  
Death, of all pain the period, not of joy;  
Joy's source and subject, still subsist unhurt;  
One, in my soul; and one, in her great fire;  
Tho' the four winds were warring for my dust.  
Yes, and from winds, and waves, and central night,  
Tho' prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,  
(To dust when drop proud nature's proudest spheres)  
And live entire. Death is the crown of life;  
Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain;  
Were death deny'd, to live would not be life;  
Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.  
Death wounds to cure: we fall; we rise; we reign!

Spring from our fetters; fasten in the skies;  
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight:  
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.  
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.  
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?  
When shall I die?—When shall I live for ever?

THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE FOURTH.

THE  
CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH;

CONTAINING  
Our only CURE for the FEAR of DEATH;

AND  
Proper SENTIMENTS of HEART on that inestimable  
Blessing.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED  
TO THE HONOURABLE  
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THE  
COMPLAINT.

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NIGHT THE FOURTH.

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A MUCH-INDEBTED Muse, O York! intrudes.

Amid the smiles of fortune, and of youth,

Thine ear is patient of a serious song.

How deep implanted in the breast of man

The dread of death? I sing its sov'reign cure.

Why start at death? where is he? death arriv'd,

Is past; not come, or gone, he's never here.

Ere hope, sensation fails; black-boding man

Receives, not suffers death's tremendous blow.

The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;

The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;

These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,

The terrors of the living, not the dead.

Imagination's fool, and error's wretch,

Man makes a death, which nature never made;

Then on the point of his own fancy falls;

And feels a thousand deaths, in fearing one.

But were death frightful, what has age to fear?

If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,

And shelter in his hospitable gloom.

I scarce can meet a monument, but holds

My younger; every date cries—' Come away.'  
 And what recalls me? look the world around,  
 And tell me what: the wisest cannot tell,  
 Should any born of woman give his thought  
 Full range, on just dislike's unbounded field;  
 Of things, the vanity; of men, the flaws;  
 Flaws in the best; the many, flaw all o'er;  
 As leopards, spotted, or as Ethiops, dark;  
 Vivacious ill; good dying immature;  
 (How immature, Narcissa's marble tells)  
 And at its death bequeathing endless pain;  
 His heart, tho' bold, would sicken at the sight,  
 And spend itself in sighs, for future scenes.

But grant to life, (and just it is to grant  
 To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;  
 A time there is, when, like a thrice-told tale,  
 Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,  
 But from our comment on the comedy,  
 Pleasing reflections on parts well sustain'd,  
 Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,  
 Or hopes of plaudits from our candid judge,  
 When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,  
 Toss fortune back her tinsel, and her plume,  
 And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me, that time is come; my world is dead;  
 A new world rises, and new manners reign:  
 Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,  
 To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.  
 What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,  
 And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;  
 Nor that the worst: ah me! the dire effect  
 Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long;

Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)

My very master-knows me not.—

Shall I dare say, peculiar is the fate;

I've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.

An object ever pressing dims the sight,

And hides behind its ardour to be seen.

When in his courtiers ears I pour my plaint,

They drink it as the nectar of the great;

And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow;

Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme:

Who cheapens life, abates the fear of death:

Twice-told the period spent on stubborn Troy,

Court favour, yet untaken, I besiege;

Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.

Alas! ambition makes my little, less;

Embitt'ring the possess'd: why wish'd-for more?

Wishing, of all employments, is the worst;

Philosophy's reverse! and health's decay!

Were I as plump as stall'd theology,

Wishing would waste me to this shade again,

Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream,

Wishing is an expedient to be poor.

Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool:

Caught at a court; purg'd off by purer air,

And simpler diet; gifts of rural life!

Blest be that hand divine which gently laid

My heart at rest beneath this humble shed.

The world's a stately bark, on dang'rous seas,

With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:

Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,

I hear the tumult of the distant throng,

As that of seas remote, or dying storms;  
 And meditate on scenes, more silent still;  
 Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.  
 Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,  
 Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,  
 Eager ambition's fiery chace I see;  
 I see the circling hunt of noisy men,  
 Burit law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,  
 Pursuing, and pursu'd, each other's prey;  
 As wolves, for rapine; as the fox, for wiles;  
 Till death, that mighty hunter, earth's them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
 What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?  
 Earth's highest station ends in, 'Here he lyes.'  
 And 'dust to dust' concludes her noblest song.  
 If this song lives, posterity shall know  
 One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
 Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late;  
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme  
 For future vacancies in church or state,  
 Some avocation deeming it—to die;  
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich;  
 Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of hell.

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!  
 Poor human ruins, tott'ring o'er the grave!  
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,  
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,  
 Still more enamour'd of this wretch'd soil?  
 Shall our pale, wither'd hands, be still stretch'd out  
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age!  
 With av'rice, and convulsions, grasping hard?  
 Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?

Man wants but little; nor that little, long;  
How soon must he resign his very dust,  
Which frugal nature lent him for an hour!  
Years unexperienc'd rush on num'rous ills;  
And soon as man, expert from time, has found  
The key of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,  
And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,  
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,  
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far  
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe  
I still survive: and am I fond of life,  
Who scarce can think it possible, I live?  
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,  
Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,  
Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,  
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.  
Life's lee is not more shallow, than impure,  
And vapid, sense and reason shew the door,  
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great arbiter of life and death!  
Nature's immortal, immaterial sun;  
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth  
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay  
The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath  
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow  
To drink the spirit of the golden day,  
And triumph in existence: and couldst know  
No motive, but my bliss; and hast ordain'd  
A rise in blessing! with the patriarch's joy,  
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;  
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust;



Or life, or death, is equal; neither weighs:  
All weight in this—O let me live to thee! ✓

Though nature's terrors, thus, may be repress'd;  
Still frowns grim death; guilt points the tyrant's spear.  
And whence all human guilt? from death forgot.  
Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm  
Of friendly warnings, which around me flew:  
And smil'd, unsmitten: small my cause to smile!  
Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,  
More dreadful by delay; the longer ere  
They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound.  
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings:  
Who can appease its anguish? how it burns!  
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw?  
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,  
And turn my fight undaunted on the tomb?

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see;  
Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.  
On high?—what means my phrenzy? I blaspheme;  
Alas! how low? how far beneath the skies?  
'The skies it form'd: and now it bleeds for me——  
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;  
Draw the dire steel—Ah no!—the dreadful blessing  
What heart or can sustain, or dares forego?  
'There hangs all human hope; that nail supports  
'The falling universe: that gone, we drop;  
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish  
Creation had been smother'd in her birth——  
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust;  
When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne!  
In heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell?  
O what a groan was there! a groan not his.

He seiz'd our dreadful right; the load sustain'd;  
And heav'd the Mountain from a guilty world.  
A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear.  
Sensations new in angels bosoms rise;  
Suspend their song; and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song to reach my lofty theme!  
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres inspire;  
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,  
And shew to men the dignity of man;  
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.  
Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,  
And Christian languish? on our hearts, not heads,  
Falls the foul infamy: My heart! awake,  
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,  
'Expended Deity on human weal?'  
Feel the great truths, which burst the tenfold night  
Of heathen error, with a golden flood  
Of endless day: to feel, is to be fir'd;  
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous pow'r!  
Still more tremendous, for thy wond'rous love!  
That arms, with awe more awful, thy commands;  
And foul transgression dips in sev'nfold night,  
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!  
In love immense, inviolably just!  
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,  
Didst stain the cross; and, work of wonders far  
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.

Bold thought! Shall I dare speak it, or repress?  
Should man more execrate, or boast, the guilt  
Which rous'd such vengeance? which such love inflam'd?  
(O'er guilt how mountainous!) with out-stretch'd arms,

Stern justice, and soft-smiling love, embrace,  
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,  
When seem'd its majesty to need support,  
Or that, or man, inevitably lost.

What, but the fathomless of thought divine,  
Could labour such expedient from despair,  
And rescue both! both rescue! both exalt!  
O how are both exalted by the deed!  
'The wond'rous deed! or shall I call it more?  
A wonder in omnipotence itself!

A mystery, no less to gods than men!

Not, thus, our infidels th' Eternal draw,  
A God all o'er, consummate, absolute,  
Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:  
'They set at odds heav'n's jarring attributes;  
And, with one excellence, another wound;  
Maim Heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams,  
Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,  
Undeify'd by their opprobrious praise;  
A God all mercy, is a God unjust,

Ye brainless wits? ye baptiz'd infidels!

Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains!  
'The ransom was paid down; the fund of heav'n,  
Heav'n's inexhaustible exhausted fund,  
Amazing, and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,  
All price beyond: though curious to compute,  
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum:  
Its value vast ungraspt by minds create,  
For ever hides, and glows, in the supreme.

And was the ransom paid? It was: and paid  
(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.  
'The sun beheld it—no, the shocking scene

Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;  
Not such as this; not such as nature makes;  
A midnight, nature shudder'd to behold;  
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without  
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!  
Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start  
At that enormous load of human guilt,  
Which bow'd his blessed head; o'erwhelm'd his cross;  
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb,  
With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?  
Hell howl'd; and heav'n that hour let fall a tear;  
Heav'n wept, that men might smile! heav'n bled, that man  
Might never die!——

And is devotion virtue? 'tis compell'd:  
What heart of stone, but glows at thoughts like these?  
Such contemplations mount us; and should mount;  
The mind still higher; nor ever glance on man,  
Unraptur'd uninflam'd.—Where roll my thoughts  
To rest from wonders? other wonders rise;  
And strike where e'er they roll: my soul is caught:  
Heav'n's sov'reign blessings, clust'ring from the cross,  
Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,  
'The pris'ner of amaze!—In his blest life  
I see the path, and, in his death, the price,  
And in his great ascent, the proof supreme  
Of immortality—And did he rise?  
Here, O ye nations! hear it, O ye dead!  
He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.  
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!  
And give the King of glory to come in:  
Who is the King of glory? He who left  
His throne of glory, for the pang of death:

Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!  
 And give the King of glory to come in.  
 Who is the King of glory? He who slew  
 The rav'nous foe, that gorg'd all human race!  
 The King of glory, He, whose glory fill'd  
 Heav'n with amazement at his love to man;  
 And with divine complacency beheld  
 Pow'r's most illumin'd, wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?  
 Oh the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd throne!  
 Last gasp of vanquish'd death. Shout earth and heaven!  
 This sum of good to man. Whose nature, then,  
 Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!  
 Then, then, I rose; then first humanity  
 Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,  
 (Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth;  
 Seiz'd in our name. E'er since, 'tis blasphemous  
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality  
 Was, then, transferr'd to death; and heav'n's duration  
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,  
 This child of dust,—man, all immortal! hail;  
 Hail, heav'n! all-lavish of strange gifts to man!  
 Thine all the glory: man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,  
 On Christian joy's exulting wing, above  
 'Th'Aonian mount?—Alas, small cause for joy!  
 What if to pain immortal? If extent  
 Of being, to preclude a close of woe!  
 Where, then, my boast of immortality?  
 I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt:  
 For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;  
 'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;



Nor that, unless his death can justify  
 Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent sight.  
 If, sick of folly, I relent; he writes  
 My name in heav'n, with that inverted spear  
 (A spear deep dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his side,  
 And open'd there a font for all mankind,  
 Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink, and live:  
 This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is this?—Survey the wond'rous cure:  
 And at each step, let higher wonder rise!  
 Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon  
 Through means, that speak its value infinite!  
 A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!  
 With blood divine of him, I made my foe!  
 Persisted to provoke! though woo'd, and aw'd,  
 Blest, and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still!  
 A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne!  
 Nor I alone, a rebel universe!  
 My species up in arms! not one exempt!  
 Yet for the foulest of the foul, he dies.  
 Most joy'd, for the redeem'd from deepest guilt!  
 As if our race were held of highest rank;  
 And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man!  
 Bound, every heart! and every bosom, burn!

Oh what a scale of miracles is here!  
 Its lowest round, high-planted on the skies;  
 Its tow'ring summit lost beyond the thought  
 Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb  
 The wonderful ascent, with equal praise!  
 Praise! flow for ever, (if astonishment  
 Will give thee leave) my praise! for ever flow;  
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heav'n

More fragrant, than Arabia sacrific'd;  
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heav'n, shall praise descend,  
With her soft plume, (from plausive angels wing  
First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,  
Thus diving in the pockets of the great?  
Is praise the perquisite of ev'ry paw,  
Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold?  
Oh love of gold, thou meanest of amours!  
Shall praise her odours waste on virtue's dead,  
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,  
Earn dirty bread by washing Æthiops fair,  
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,  
A scavenger in scenes, where vacant posts,  
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect  
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones,  
Return, apostate praise! thou vagabond!  
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,  
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrival'd theme.

There flow redundant; like Meander flow,  
Back to thy fountain; to that Parent Power,  
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,  
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,  
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow  
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,  
Of guilt to guilt; and turn their backs on thee,  
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;  
To prostrate angels, an amazing scene!  
O the presumption of man's awe for man!—  
Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!  
Thine, all; day thine, and thine this gloom of night,  
With all her wealth; with all her radiant worlds!

What, night eternal, but a frown from thee?  
 What, heav'n's meridian glory, but thy smile?  
 And shall not praise be thine! not human praise?  
 While heav'n's high host on hallelujahs live?  
 O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe  
 My soul in praise to him, who gave my soul,  
 And all her infinite of prospect fair,  
 Cut thro' the shades of hell, great love! by thee,  
 Oh most adorable! most unador'd!  
 Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should end?  
 Where-e'er I turn, what claim on all applause!  
 How is night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,  
 How richly wrought with attributes divine!  
 What wisdom shines! what love! this midnight pomp,  
 This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!  
 Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;  
 For others this profusion: thou, apart,  
 Above, beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind!  
 Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?  
 Call to the sun, or ask the roaring winds,  
 For their Creator? shall I question loud  
 The thunder, if in that th'Almighty dwells?  
 Or holds he furious storms in straiten'd reins,  
 And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?  
 What mean these questions?—trembling I retract;  
 My prostrate soul adores the present God:  
 Praise I a distant Deity? he tunes  
 My voice, (if tun'd;) the nerve, that writes, sustains:  
 Wrapp'd in his being, I resound his praise:  
 But though past all diffus'd, without a shore,  
 His essence; local is his throne (as meet)  
 To gather the dispers'd (as standards call

The lifted from afar) to fix a point,  
 A central point, collective of his sons,  
 Since finite ev'ry nature, but his own.

The nameless he, whose nod is nature's birth;  
 And nature's shield the shadow of his hand;  
 Her dissolution, his suspended smile!  
 'The great First-Last! pavilion'd high he sits  
 In darkness from excessive splendor, borne,  
 By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost.  
 His glory, to created glory, bright,  
 As that to central horrors; he looks down  
 On all that soars, and spans immensity.

Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,  
 Boundless creation! what art thou? A beam,  
 A mere effluvium of his majesty;  
 And shall an atom of this atom-world  
 Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of heaven?  
 Down to the centre should I send my thought  
 Thro' beds of glittering ore, and glowing gems,  
 Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;  
 Goes out in darkness; if on tow'ring wing,  
 I send it tho' the boundless vault of stars!  
 (The stars, thro' rich, what dross their gold to thee,  
 Great! good! wise! wonderful! eternal King!)  
 If to those conscious stars thy throne around,  
 Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing blefs;  
 And ask their strain; they want it, more they want,  
 Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,  
 Languid their energy, their ardour cold,  
 Indebted still, their highest rapture burns;  
 Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.

Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;

Their vast appointments reach it not; they see  
 On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high;  
 And downward look for heav'n's superior praise!  
 Not born of ether! high in fields of light!  
 Now man, to see the glory of your God!  
 Could angels envy, they had envy'd here;  
 And some did envy; and the rest, though gods,  
 Yet fail'd gods unredeem'd (there triumphs man,  
 Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)  
 They less would feel, though more adorn, my theme.  
 They sung creation (for in that they shar'd;)  
 Now rose in melody, the Child of love!  
 Creation's great superior, man! is thine;  
 Mine is redemption; they just gave the key:  
 Is thine to raise, and eternize, the song;  
 Though human, yet divine; for should not this  
 Give man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?  
 Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;  
 Redemption! 'twas the labour of the skies;  
 Not more than labour——it was death in heav'n.  
 Truth so strange! 'twere bold to think it true;  
 Not far bolder still, to disbelieve.  
 Here pause, and ponder: was there death in heaven?  
 What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?  
 Who struck it? Who?——O how is man enlarg'd,  
 Men through this medium! how the pigmy tow'rs!  
 Now counterpois'd his origin from dust!  
 Now counterpois'd, to dust his sad return!  
 Now voided his vast distance from the skies!  
 Now near he presses on the seraph's wing!  
 Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?  
 Now this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud



Of guilt, and clay condens't, the Son of heaven!  
 The double son; the made, and the re-made!  
 And shall heaven's double property be lost?  
 Man's double madness only can destroy.  
 To man the bleeding cross has promis'd all;  
 The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace;  
 Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny?  
 O ye! who, from this Rock of ages, leap,  
 Disdainful, plunging headlong in the deep!  
 What cordial joy, what consolation strong,  
 Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,  
 Our int'rest in the master of the storm?  
 Cling there, and in wreck'd nature's ruins smile;  
 While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

Man! know thyself. All wisdom centres there:  
 To none man seems ignoble, but to man;  
 Angels that grandeur, men o'erlook, admire:  
 How long shall human nature be their book,  
 Degen'rate mortal! and unread by thee?  
 The beam dim reason sheds shews wonders there;  
 What high contents! illustrious faculties!  
 But the grand comment, which displays at full  
 Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,  
 By Heav'n compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself  
 An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?  
 A glorious partner with the Deity  
 In that high attribute, immortal life?  
 If a god bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm:  
 I gaze, and, as I gaze, my mounting soul  
 Catches strange fire, eternity! at thee;  
 And drops the world—or rather, more enjoys:

How chang'd the face of nature! how improv'd!  
What seem'd a chaos, shines a glorious world,  
Or, what a world, an Eden; heighten'd all!  
It is another scene! another self!  
And still another, as time rolls along;  
And that a self far more illustrious still.  
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades  
Unpierc'd by bold conjecture's keenest ray,  
What evolutions of surprising fate!  
How nature opens, and receives my soul  
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods  
Encounter, and embrace me! what new births  
Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,  
Where what new charms, perhaps, whate'er exists,  
Old Time, and fair Creation, are forgot!  
Is this extravagant? Of man we form  
Extravagant conception, to be just:  
Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him:  
Beyond its reach, the Godhead only, more.  
He, the great Father! kindled at one flame  
The world of rationals; one spirit pour'd  
From spirit's awful fountain; pour'd himself  
Thro' all their souls; but not in equal stream,  
Profuse, or frugal, of th' inspiring God,  
As his wise plan demanded; and when past  
Their various trials, in their various spheres,  
They continue rational, as made,  
Reforbs them all into himself again;  
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.  
Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,  
Tho' yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?  
Angels are men of a superior kind;

Angels are men in lighter habit clad,  
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight;  
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,  
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,  
And slipp'ry step, the bottom of the steep.  
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise;  
While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,  
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,  
Which flames eternal crimson thro' the skies.  
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,  
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.  
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung  
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,  
Sent by the SOV'REIGN; and are these, O man!  
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn  
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies  
To wretched man, the goddess in her left  
Holds out this world, and, in her right the next;  
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;  
Supporter sole of man above himself;  
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,  
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.  
Religion! providence! an after-state;  
Here is firm footing, here is solid rock;  
This can support us; all is sea besides;  
Sinks under us, bestorms, and then devours,  
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,  
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick, polluted air,  
Darkness, and stench, and suffocating damps,  
And dungeon-horrors, by kind fate, discharg'd,

Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure  
 Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,  
 His heart exults, his spirits cast their load;  
 As if new-born, he triumphs in the change;  
 So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims,  
 And fordid sweets, from feculence and froth  
 Of ties terrestrial, set at large, she mounts  
 To reason's region, her own element,  
 Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness;  
 And, groaning Calvary, of thee<sup>t</sup> there shine  
 The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;  
 There sacred violence assaults the soul;  
 There, nothing but compulsion is forborn.  
 Can love allure us? or can terror awe?  
 He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun;  
 He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.  
 If, in his love, so terrible, what then  
 His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?  
 Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires?  
 Can pray'r, can praise avert it?—Thou, my all!  
 My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!  
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!  
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world  
 My light in darkness! and my life in death!  
 My boast thro' time! bliss thro' eternity!  
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise!  
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man!  
 To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me;  
 My sacrifice! my God! what things are these!  
 What then art THOU? by what name shall I call thee?  
 Knew I the name devout archangels use,

Devout archangels should the name enjoy,  
 By me unrivall'd; thousands more sublime,  
 None half so dear, as that, which, tho' unspoke,  
 Still glows at heart: O how omnipotence  
 Is lost in love! thou great PHILANTHROPIST!  
 Father of angels! but the friend of man!  
 Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!  
 Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand  
 From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!  
 How art thou pleas'd, by bounty to distress!  
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,  
 Too big for birth! to favour, and confound;  
 To challenge, and to distance, all return!  
 Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,  
 And leave praise panting in the distant vale!  
 Thy right too great defrauds thee of thy due;  
 And sacrilegious our sublimest song.  
 But since the naked will obtains thy smile,  
 Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,  
 And future life symphonious to my strain,  
 ('That noblest hymn to heav'n!) for ever lye  
 Intomb'd my fear of death! and ev'ry fear,  
 'The dread of ev'ry evil, but thy frown.

Whom see I yonder, so demurely smile?  
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.  
 Ye Quietists, in homage to the skies!  
 Serene! of soft address! who mildly make  
 An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,  
 Abhorring violence! who halt indeed;  
 But, for the blessing, wrestle not with heav'n!  
 'Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?  
 Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?



Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd  
 To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!  
 Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs;  
 Oh for an humbler heart, and prouder song!  
 THOU, my much-injur'd theme! with that soft eye,  
 Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look  
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast;  
 And pardon to the winter in my strain.

O ye cold-hearted, frozen, formalists!  
 On such a theme, 'tis impious to be calm;  
 Passion is reason, transport temper, here.  
 Shall heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has shewn  
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain  
 What smooth emollients in theology,  
 Recumbent virtue's downy doctors preach,  
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?  
 Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd?  
 Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout;  
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heav'n;  
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung;  
 High heav'n's orchestra chants *Amen* to man.

Hear I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,  
 Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heav'n,  
 Soft-wafted on celestial pity's plume,  
 Thro' the vast spaces of the universe,  
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?  
 Oh when will death (now stingless,) like a friend,  
 Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death,  
 This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down?  
 Give beings, one in nature, one abode?  
 Oh death divine, that giv'st us to the skies!  
 Great future! glorious patron of the past,

And present! when shall I thy shrine adore;  
 From nature's continent, immensely wide,  
 Immensely blest, this little isle of life.  
 This dark, incarcerating colony,  
 Divides us. Happy day! that breaks our chain:  
 That manumits; that calls from exile home;  
 That leads to nature's great metropolis,  
 And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand  
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne;  
 Who hears our Advocate, and thro' his wounds  
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.  
 'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command:  
 'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wife;  
 ✓ 'Tis impious, in a good man, to be sad.

See'st thou, Lorenzo! where hangs all our hope?  
 Touch'd by the cross, we live; or, more than die;  
 That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine  
 Than that, which touch'd confusion into form,  
 And darkness into glory, partial touch!  
 Ineffably pre-eminent regard!  
 Sacred to man, and sov'reign thro' the whole  
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs  
 From heav'n thro' all duration, and supports  
 In one illustrious, and amazing plan,  
 Thy welfare, nature! and thy God's renown;  
 That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul  
 Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,  
 Turns earth to heaven, to heav'nly thrones transforms  
 The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb.

Dost ask me when? when He who dy'd returns?  
 Returns, how chang'd! Where then the man of woe  
 In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns;

And all his courts, exhausted by the tide  
Of Deities triumphant in his train,  
Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven;  
Replenisht soon, replenisht with increase  
Of pomp, and multitude; a radiant band  
Of angels new; of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise  
Dark doubts between the promise, and event?  
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;  
Read nature; nature is a friend to truth;  
Nature is Christian; preaches to mankind;  
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.  
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?  
'Th' illustrious stranger passing terror sheds  
On gazing nations, from his fiery train  
Of length enormous, takes his ample round  
Thro' depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds,  
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide  
Heav'n's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,  
From the long travel of a thousand years.  
Thus, at the destin'd period, shall return  
HE, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze:  
And, with him, all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point;  
Or hope precarious in low whisper breathes;  
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,  
But turn, and dart into the dark again.  
Faith builds a bridge across the gulph of death,  
To break the shock blind nature cannot shun,  
And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.  
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes;  
That mountain barrier between man and peace.

'Tis faith disarms destruction; and absolves  
From ev'ry clam'rous charge, the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—'Reason bids,  
'All-sacred reason.'—Hold her sacred still;  
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame:  
All-sacred reason! source, and soul, of all  
Demanding praise, on earth, or earth above!  
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds,  
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.  
Wear I the blessed cross, by fortune stamp'd  
On passive nature, before thought was born?  
My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!  
No; reason rebaptiz'd me when adult;  
Weigh'd true, and false, in her impartial scale;  
My heart became the convert of my head;  
And made that choice, which once was but my fate.  
'On argument alone my faith is built:'  
Reason pursu'd is faith; and, unpursu'd  
Where proof invites, 'tis reason, then, no more'  
And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,  
Or reason lyes, and heav'n design'd it wrong:  
Absolve we this? what, then, is blasphemy?  
Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,  
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;  
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.  
Reason the root, fair faith is but the flower:  
The fading flower shall die; but reason lives  
Immortal, as her father in the skies.  
When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.  
Wrong not the Christian; think not reason yours;  
'Tis reason our great master holds so dear;  
'Tis reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;

'Tis reason's voice obey'd, his glories crown;  
To give lost reason life, he pour'd his own:  
Believe, and shew the reason of a man;  
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;  
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb:  
Thro' reason's wounds alone thy faith can die;  
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to death,  
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due  
To those, who push our antitode aside;  
Those boasted friends to reason, and to man,  
Whose fatal love stabs ev'ry joy, and leaves  
Death's terror heighten'd gnawing on his heart.  
These pompous sons of reason idoliz'd,  
And vilify'd at once; of reason dead,  
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old;  
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?  
While love of truth thro' all their camp refounds,  
They draw pride's curtain o'er the noon tide-ray,  
Spike up their inch of reason, on the point  
Of philosophic wit, call'd argument;  
And then, exulting in their taper, cry,  
' Behold the sun;' and, Indian-like, adore.

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!  
Thou maker of new morals to mankind!  
The grand morality is love of thee.  
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,  
(Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown)  
As wise as Socrates, might justly stand  
The definition of a modern fool.

A CHRISTIAN is the highest stile of man,  
And is there, who the blessed cross wipes off,



As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow?  
If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:  
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,  
More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!  
(For such alone the Christian banner fly)  
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?  
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:  
' He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,  
' And says, he call'd another; that arrives,  
' Meets the same welcome; yet he stills calls on;  
' Till one calls him, who varies not his call,  
' But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,  
' 'Till nature dies, and judgment sets him free;  
' A freedom far less welcome than his chain.'

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;  
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour!  
That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,  
That, like a post, comes on in full career:  
How swift the shuttle flies, that weaves thy shroud!  
Where is the fable of thy former years?  
' Thrown down the gulph of time; as far from thee  
As they had ne'er been thine; the day in hand,  
Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;  
Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;  
And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd  
By strides as swift: eternity is all;  
And whose eternity? who triumphs there?  
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!  
For ever basking in the Deity!  
Lorenzo! who?—Thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak; twill speak ere long,

Thy leave unaskt: Lorenzo! hear it now,  
While useful its advice, its accent mild.  
By the great edict, by divine decree,  
Truth is deposited with man's last hour;  
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;  
Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity;  
Truth, of his council, when he made the worlds;  
Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made;  
Tho' silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,  
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,  
That heav'n commission'd hour no sooner calls,  
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,  
Like him they fable under *Ætna* whelm'd,  
The goddess bursts in thunder, and in flame;  
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.  
Dark dæmons I discharge, and hydra-stings;  
The keen vibrations of bright truth—is hell:  
Just definition! tho' by schools untaught.  
Ye deaf to truth! peruse this parson'd page,  
And trust, for once, a prophet, and a priest;  
'Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.'

N I

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THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE FIFTH.

THE  
RELAPSE.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

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THE  
COMPLAINT.

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NIGHT THE FIFTH.

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LORENZO! to recriminate is just.  
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.  
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.  
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who fought no more.  
As just thy second charge. I grant the muse  
Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons,  
Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause;  
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,  
And subtilize the gross into refin'd:  
As if to magic numbers pow'rful charm  
Twas given, to make a civet of their song  
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.  
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,  
And lifts our swine enjoyments from the mire.  
The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.  
We wear the chains of pleasure, and of pride.  
These share the man; and these distract him too;  
Draw diff'rent ways, and clash in their commands.  
Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;  
But pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground.  
Boys shar'd by brute-creation, prideresents;  
VOL. I. G

Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,  
 And both at once: a point how hard to gain!  
 But, what can't wit, when stung by strong desire?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprize.  
 Since joys of sense can't rise to reason's taste;  
 In subtle sophistry's laborious forge,  
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that swoops  
 To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.  
 Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose;  
 Nor less than a plumb god to fill the bowl:  
 A thousand phantoms, and a thousand spells,  
 A thousand opiates scatters, to delude,  
 To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,  
 And the fool'd mind of man delightfully confound.  
 Thus that which shock'd the judgment, shocks no more:  
 That which gave pride offence, no more offends.  
 Pleasure and pride, by nature mortal foes,  
 At war eternal, which in man shall reign,  
 By Wit's address, patch up a fatal peace,  
 And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,  
 From rank, refin'd to delicate and gay.  
 Art, curst art! wipes off the indebted blush  
 From nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry shame.  
 Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,  
 And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,  
 These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.  
 The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd  
 O'er spotted vice, fill half the letter'd world.  
 Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,  
 And consecrate enormities with song?

But let not these inexpiable strains

Condemn the muse that knows her dignity;  
 Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world  
 As 'tis, in nature's ample field, a point,  
 A point in her esteem; from whence to start,  
 And run the round of universal space,  
 To visit being universal there,  
 And being's source, that utmost flight of mind!  
 Yet, spite of this so vast circumference,  
 Well knows, but what is moral, nought is great.  
 Sing Syrens only? do not angels sing?  
 There is in poesy a decent pride,  
 Which well becomes her when she speak to prose,  
 Her younger sister; haply, not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo! to find pastimes here?  
 No guilty passion blown into a flame,  
 No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,  
 No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r,  
 No rainbow colours, here, or filken tale:  
 But solemn counsels, images of awe,  
 Truths, which eternity lets fall on man  
 With double weight, thro' these revolving spheres,  
 This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:  
 Thoughts, such as shall revisit your last hour;  
 Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires;  
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still  
 Melancholy dipt, embrowns the whole.

Yet this, ev'n this, my laughter-loving friends!  
 Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!

What imports you most, can most engage,  
 Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.  
 If you fail me, know, the wise shall taste  
 The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel;

And, feeling, give assent; and their assent  
 Is ample recompence; is more than praise.  
 But chiefly thine, O LITCHFIELD! nor mistake;  
 Think not un-introduc'd I force my way;  
 Narcissa, not unknown, not unall'y'd,  
 By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth!  
 To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,  
 Where all the language harmony, descends  
 Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse:  
 A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise;  
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O Thou! blest Spirit! whether the supreme,  
 Great antemundane Father! in whose breast  
 Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,  
 And all its various revolutions roll'd  
 Present, tho' future; prior to themselves;  
 Whose breath can blow it into nought again;  
 Or from his throne some delegated pow'r,  
 Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought  
 From vain and vile, to solid and sublime!  
 Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts  
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream,  
 And fuller of the God, than that which burst  
 From fam'd Castalia: nor is yet allay'd  
 My sacred thirst; tho' long my soul has rang'd  
 Thro' pleasing paths of moral and divine,  
 By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the STARS.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;  
 Nights are their days, their most illumin'd hours.  
 By day, the soul, o'erborn by life's career,  
 Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,  
 Reels far from reason, jost'ed by the throng.

By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts  
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.  
By night from objects free, from passion cool,  
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpres'd the births  
Of pure election, arbitrary range,  
Not to the limits of one world confin'd;  
But from ethereal travels light on earth,  
As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond  
Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore:  
Darkness has more divinity for me;  
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul  
To settle on herself, our point supreme!  
'There lies our theatre; there sits our judge.  
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;  
'Tis the kind hand of providence stretcht out  
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis reason's reign,  
And virtue's too; these tutelary shades  
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.  
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too;  
It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair below,  
Her tender nature suffers in the croud,  
Nor touches on the world, without a stain:  
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,  
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.  
Something we thought, is blotted; we resolv'd,  
Is shaken; we renounc'd, returns again.  
Each salutation may slide in a sin  
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.  
Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise  
All, scatter us abroad; thought outward-bound,



Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off  
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,  
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,  
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.  
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain  
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast;  
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe;  
And inhumanity is caught from man,  
From smiling man. A slight, a single glance,  
And shot at random, often has brought home  
A sudden fever, to the throbbing heart,  
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.  
We see, we hear, with peril; safety dwells  
Remote from multitude; the world's a school  
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around!  
We must or imitate, or disapprove;  
Must list as their accomplices, or foes;  
That stains our innocence; this wounds our peace.  
From nature's birth, hence, wisdom has been smit  
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade.

This sacred shade, and solitude, what is it?  
'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone.  
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,  
And looks, like other objects, black by night.  
By night an atheist half-believes a God.

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend;  
'The conscious moon, thro' ev'ry distant age,  
Has held a lamp to wisdom, and let fall,  
On contemplation's eye, her purging ray.  
'The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from heav'n

Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,  
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,  
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest  
His lab'ring mind, the stars in silence slide,  
And seem all gazing on their future guest,  
See him soliciting his ardent suit  
In private audience: all the live-long night,  
Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands;  
Nor quits his theme, or posture, till the sun  
(Rude drunkard rising rosy from the main!)  
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,  
And gives him to the tumult of the world.  
Hail, precious moments! stol'n from the black waste  
Of murder'd time! auspicious Midnight! hail!  
The world excluded, every passion hush'd,  
And open'd a calm intercourse with heav'n,  
Here the soul sits in council; ponders past,  
Predestines future action; sees, not feels,  
Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm;  
All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!

I am not pent in darkness; rather say  
(If not too bold) in darkness I'm embow'r'd.  
Delightful gloom! the clust'ring thoughts around  
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;  
But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.  
Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,  
Fountain of animation! whence descends  
URANIA, my celestial guest! who deigns  
Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now  
Conscious how needful discipline to man,  
From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night

My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites  
Far other beat of heart; Narcissa's tomb!

Or is it feeble nature calls me back,  
And breaks my spirit into grief again?  
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?  
A cold, slow puddle, creeping thro' my veins?  
Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all.  
What are we? how unequal! now we soar,  
And now we sink; to be the same, transcends  
Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul  
For lodging ill, too dearly rents her clay.  
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds  
The blush of weakness, to the bane of woe.  
The noblest spirit fighting her hard fate,  
In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,  
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;  
Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall.  
Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;  
And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praise.

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.  
Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,  
Experience damps our triumph. I, who late  
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,  
Where grief detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high,  
Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,  
And call'd mankind to glory, shook off pain,  
Mortality shook off, in ether pure,  
And struck the stars; now feel my spirits fail;  
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,  
Like him whom fable sleg'd with waxen wings,  
In sorrow drown'd—but not, in sorrow, lost.  
How wretched is the man, who never mourn'd!

I dive for precious pearl, in sorrow's stream:  
Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves;  
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,  
(Inestimable gain!) and gives heav'n leave  
To make him but more wretched, not more wise

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else  
Ennobles man? what else have angels learnt?)  
Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,  
Than genius, or proud learning, e'er could boast.  
Voracious learning, often over-fed,

Digests not into sense her motely meal.  
This book-case, with dark booty almost burst,

This forager on others wisdom, leaves

Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd.

With mixt manure she surfeits the rank soil,

Dung'd, but not dress'd; and rich to beggary.

A pomp untameable of weeds prevails.

Her servant's wealth incumber'd wisdom mourns.

And what says genius? 'Let the dull be wise.'

Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong;

And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.

It pleads exemption from the laws of sense;

Considers reason as a leveller;

And scorns to share a blessing with the croud.

That wise it could be, thinks an ample claim

To glory, and to pleasure gives the rest.

Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.

Wisdom less shudders at a fool, than wit.

But wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep.

When sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,

And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower;

Her seed celestial, then glad wisdom sows,

Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.  
If so, Narcissa! welcome my Relapse;  
I'll raise a tax on my calamity,  
And reap rich compensation from my pain.  
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field;  
And gather every thought of sov'reign power  
To chase the moral maladies of man;  
Thoughts, which may bear transplanting to the skies,  
Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil;  
Nor wholly wither there, where seraphs sing,  
Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in heav'n.  
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same  
In either clime, though more illustrious there.  
These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,  
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb;  
And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.

Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?

- 'Th' importance of contemplating the tomb;
- 'Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;
- 'The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;
- 'And death's dread character—invite my song.'

And, first, th' importance of our end survey'd.  
Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief:  
Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal too soon.  
Are they more kind than he, who struck the blow?  
Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,  
And banish peace, till nobler guests arrive,  
And bring it back, a true, and endless peace?  
Calamities are friends: as glaring day  
Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight;  
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts  
Of import high, and light divine, to man.



The man how blest, who, sick of gaudy scenes,  
 (Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)  
 Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk,  
 Beneath death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,  
 Unpierc'd by vanity's fantastic ray;  
 To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,  
 Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!  
 Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;  
 (Narcissa was thy fav'rite) let us read  
 Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;  
 Few orators so tenderly can touch  
 The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!  
 Apt words can strike; and yet in them we see  
 Faint images of what we, here, enjoy.  
 What cause have we to build on length of life?  
 Temptations seize, when fear is laid asleep;  
 And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,  
 Truth, radiant goddess! fallies on my soul,  
 And puts delusion's dusky train to flight;  
 Dispels the mists our sultry passions raise,  
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene;  
 And shews the real estimate of things;  
 Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;  
 Pulls off the veil from virtue's rising charms;  
 Detects temptation in a thousand lies.  
 Truth bids me look on men, as autumn leaves,  
 And all they bleed for, as the summer's dust,  
 Driv'n by the whirlwind: lighted by her beams,  
 I widen my horizon, gain new powers,  
 See things invisible, feel things remote,  
 Am present with futurities; think nought

To man so foreign, as the joys possess;  
 Nought so much his, as those beyond the grave.  
 No folly keeps its colour in her sight;  
 Pale worldly wisdom loses all her charms;  
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound,  
 If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,  
 Like Sybil, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss!  
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.  
 Not so, celestial: Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo!  
 How differ worldly wisdom, and divine?  
 Just as the waning, and the waxing moon,  
 More empty worldly wisdom ev'ry day;  
 And ev'ry day more fair her rival shines.  
 When later, there's less time to play the fool.  
 Soon our whole term for wisdom is expir'd  
 ('Thou know'st the calls no council in the grave:)  
 And everlasting fool is writ in fire,  
 Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble Sybil's leaves,  
 The good man's days to Sybil's books compare,  
 (In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)  
 In price still rising, as in number less,  
 Inestimable quite his final hour.  
 For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones;  
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.  
 'Oh let me die his death!' all nature cries.  
 'Then live his life'——All nature falters there.  
 Our great physician daily to consult,  
 To commune with the grave, our only cure:

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's; and yet  
 From a friend's grave, how soon we disengage!  
 Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.

Why are friends raviſht from us? 'tis to bind,  
By ſoft affection's ties, on human hearts,  
The thought of death, which reaſon, too ſupine,  
Or miſemploy'd, ſo rarely faſtens there.  
Ner reaſon, nor affection, no, nor both  
Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.  
Behold th' inexorable hour at hand!  
Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!  
And to forget it, the chief aim of life,  
Though well to ponder it, is life's chief end.

Is death, that ever threat'ning, ne'er remote,  
That all-important, and that only ſure,  
(Come when he will) an unexpected gueſt?  
Nay, though invited by the loudeſt calls  
Of blind imprudence, unexpected ſtill?  
Though num'rous meſſengers are ſent before  
To warn his great arrival. What the cauſe,  
The wond'rous cauſe, of this myſterious ill?  
All heav'n looks down aſtoniſh'd at the ſight.

Is it that life has ſown her joys ſo thick,  
We can't thruſt in a ſingle care between?  
Is it, that life has ſuch a ſwarm of cares,  
The thought of death can't enter for the throng?  
Is it, that time ſeals on with downy feet,  
Nor wakes indulgence from her golden dream?  
To-day is ſo like yeſterday, it cheats;  
We take the lying ſiſter for the ſame.  
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook;  
For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.  
In the ſame brook none ever bath'd him twice;  
To the ſame life none ever twice awoke.  
We call the brook the ſame; the ſame we think

Our life, though still more rapid in its flow;  
 Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,  
 And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say,  
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on)  
 'That life is like a vessel on the stream?  
 In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide  
 Of time descend, but not on time intent;  
 Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave;  
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;  
 We start, awake, look out; what see we there?  
 Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause death flies all human thought?  
 Or is it judgment by the will struck blind,  
 That domineering mistress of the soul!  
 Like him so strong by Dalilah the fair?  
 Or is it fear turns startled reason back,  
 From looking down a precipice so steep?  
 'Tis dreadful; and the dread is wisely plac'd,  
 By nature conscious of the make of man.  
 A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,  
 A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.  
 By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour.  
 The good man would repine; would suffer joys,  
 And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.  
 The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride,  
 Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,  
 Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,  
 And mar the schemes of providence below.

What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise;  
 And drown, in your less execrable yell,  
 Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,  
 On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,

Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.  
Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,  
So call'd, so thought—and then he fled the field,  
Less base the fear of death, than fear of life.  
O Britain, infamous for suicide!  
An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd  
From the whole world of rationals beside!  
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,  
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd, while I detect the cause  
Of self-affault, expose the monster's birth,  
And bid abhorrence hiss it round the world.  
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun;  
The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd;  
Immoral climes kind nature never made.  
The cause I sing, in Eden might prevail,  
And proves, it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow,  
Who names his soul) a native of the skies!  
High-born, and free, her freedom should maintain,  
Unfold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.  
Th' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,  
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,  
Studious of home, and ardent to return,  
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup  
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge,  
On immortality, her godlike taste;  
There take large draughts; make her chief banquet there.

But some reject this sustenance divine;  
To beggarly vile appetites descend;  
Ask alms of earth, for guests that came from heav'n;  
Sink into slaves; and sell, for present hire,



Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)  
 Their native freedom, to the prince who sways  
 This nether world. And when his payments fail,  
 When his foul basket gorges them no more,  
 Or their pall'd palats loath the basket full;  
 Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,  
 For breaking all the chains of providence,  
 And bursting their confinement; though fast barr'd  
 By laws divine and human; guarded strong  
 With horrors doubled to defend the pass,  
 The blackest, nature, or dire guilt, can raise;  
 And moated round, with fathomless destruction,  
 Sure to receive, and whelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,  
 Or worse, o'erlook'd; o'erlook'd by magistrates,  
 Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed  
 Is madness; but the madness of the heart.  
 And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.  
 A sensual, unreflecting life, is big  
 With monstrous births, and suicide, to crown  
 The black infernal brood. The bold to break  
 Heav'n's law supreme, and desperately rush  
 Through sacred nature's murder, on their own,  
 Because they never think of death, they die.

'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,  
 At once to shun, and meditate, his end.  
 When by the bed of languishment we sit,  
 (The seat of wisdom! if our choice, not fate)  
 Or, o'er our dying friends, in anguish hang,  
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,  
 Number their moments, and, in ev'ry clock,  
 Start at the voice of an eternity;

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See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift  
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,  
Then sink again, and quiver into death,  
That most pathetic herald of our own;  
How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man  
In perfect vengeance? No; in pity sent,  
To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,  
Indelible, death's image on his heart;  
Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.  
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile.  
The mind turns fool, before the cheek is dry.  
Our quick-returning folly cancels all;  
As the tide rushing raises what is writ  
In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh;  
Or study'd the philosophy of tears?  
(A science, yet, unlectur'd in our schools!)  
Hast thou descended deep into the breast,  
And seen their source? if not, descend with me,  
And trace these briny riv'lets to their springs.

Our fun'ral tears, from diff'rent causes rise.  
As if from sep'rate cisterns in the soul,  
Of various kinds, they flow. From tender hearts,  
By soft contagion call'd, some burst at once,  
And stream obsequious to the leading eye.  
Some ask more time, by curious art distill'd.  
Some hearts in secret hard, unapt to melt,  
Struck by the magic of the public eye,  
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain.  
Some weep to share the fame of the deceas'd,  
So high in merit, and to them so dear.  
They dwell on praises, which they think they share;

And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.  
Some mourn in proof, that something they could love;  
They weep not to relieve their grief, but shew.  
Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,  
As conscious all their love is in arrear.  
Some mischievously weep, not unappris'd.  
Tears, sometimes, aid the conquest of an eye.  
With what address the soft Ephesians draw  
'Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts?  
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,  
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek?  
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,  
Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.  
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,  
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.  
By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,  
Because a decent veil conceals their joy,

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain;  
As deep in indiscretion, as in woe.  
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours  
'Tears, that deserve more tears; while reason sleeps;  
Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd;  
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;  
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.  
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,  
That noble gift! that privilege of man!  
From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy.  
But these are barren of that birth divine;  
They weep impetuous, as the summer-storm,  
And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,  
They make a pastime of the stings tale;  
Far as the deep-resounding knell, they spread

The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more.

No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.

Half-round the globe, the tears pump't up by death  
Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life;

In making folly flourish still more fair.

When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,

Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust;

Instead of learning, there, her true support,

Though there thrown down her true support to learn,

Without heav'n's aid impatient to be blest,

She crawls to the next shrub, or bramble vile,

Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell;

With stale, foresworn embraces, clings anew,

The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,

In all the fruitless fopperies of life:

Presents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,

And rattles for the death's head on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth

Stept in, with his receipt for making smiles,

And blanching fables into bridal bloom.

So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate;

Who gave that angel boy, on whom he doats;

And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

Not such, Narcissa, my distress for thee,

I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,

To sacrifice to wisdom——What wast thou?

'Young, gay, and fortunate!' Each yields a theme,

I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;

(Heaven knows I labour with severer still!)

I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.

A soul without reflection, like a pile

Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth. What says it to grey hairs?  
 Narcissa, I'm become thy pupil now——  
 Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,  
 She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heaven.  
 Time on this head has snow'd; yet still 'tis borne  
 Aloft; nor thinks but on another's grave.  
 Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe  
 Old worn out vice sets down for virtue fair;  
 With graceless gravity, chastising youth,  
 That youth chastis'd surpassing in a fault,  
 Father of all, forgetfulness of death:  
 As if, like objects pressing on the sight,  
 Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen:  
 Or, that life's loan time ripen'd into right;  
 And men might plead prescription from the grave;  
 Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.  
 Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;  
 Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some god! my guardian angel! tell,  
 What thus infatuates? what enchantment plants  
 The phantom of an age 'twixt us and death  
 Already at the door? He knocks, we hear him,  
 And yet we will not hear. What mail defends  
 Our untouch'd hearts? what miracle turns off  
 The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers  
 Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd?  
 We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs  
 Around us falling; wounded oft ourselves;  
 Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal still!  
 We see time's furrows on another's brow,  
 And death intrench'd, preparing his assault;  
 How few themselves, in that just mirror, see!



Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong!  
Their death is certain; doubtful here: he must,  
And soon; we may, within an age, expire.  
Tho' grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green;  
Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent;  
Folly sings six, while nature points at twelve.

Absurd longevity! more, more, it cries:  
More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.  
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?  
Object, and appetite, must club for joy;  
Shall folly labour hard to mend the bow,  
Baubles, I mean, that strike us from without,  
While nature is relaxing ev'ry string?  
Ask thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.  
Think you the soul, when this life's rattle cease,  
Has nothing of more manly to succeed?  
Contract the taste immortal; learn ev'n now  
To relish what alone subsists hereafter.  
Divine, or none, henceforth your joys for ever.  
Of age the glory is, to wish to die.  
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds  
Past life, and promises our future bliss.  
What weakness see not children in their fires?  
Grand-climacterical absurdities!  
Grey-hair'd authority, to faults of youth,  
How shocking! It makes folly thrice a fool;  
And our first childhood might our last despise.  
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope.  
Nothing but wisdom gives the first; the last,  
Nothing, but the repute of being wise.  
Folly bars both; our age is quite undone.  
What folly can be ranker? Like our shadows,

Our wishes lengthen, as our sun declines.  
No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.  
Our hearts should leave the world, before the knell  
Calls for our carcases to mend the soil.  
Enough to live in tempest, die in port;  
Age should fly concurrence, cover in retreat  
Defects of judgment; and the will's subdue;  
Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore  
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon;  
And put good works on board; and wait the wind  
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown;  
If unconsider'd too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee  
Their future fate; their future fate foretaste;  
This art would waste the bitterness of death.  
The thought of death alone, the fear destroys.  
A disaffection to that precious thought  
Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,  
Which sleeps beneath it, on a precipice,  
Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly press,  
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,  
The thought of death? That thought is the machine,  
The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust,  
And rears us into men. That thought ply'd home  
Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice  
O'er-hanging hell, will soften the descent,  
And gently slope our passage to the grave;  
How warmly to be wish'd! What heart of flesh  
Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?  
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? What hand,  
Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,

(To speak a language too well known to thee)  
Would at a moment give its all to chance,  
And stamp the die for an eternity?

Aid me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace  
With destiny; and ere her scissars cut  
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread  
Of moral death, that ties me to the world.

Bring thou my slumb'ring reason to send forth  
A thought of observation on the foe;

To rally; and survey the rapid march  
Of his ten thousand messengers to man;  
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all.

All accident apart, by nature sign'd,  
My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet;  
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then forward only look for death?  
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.

Man is a self survivor ev'ry year.

Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.

Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey.

My youth, my noon-tide, his; my yesterday;

The bold invader shares the present hour.

Each moment on the former shuts the grave.

While man is growing, life is in decrease;

And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun:

It tapers waste, that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear, lest that should come to pass,

Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?

Fear we must, lest that death turn us pale,

Which murders strength and ardor; what remains

Could rather call on death, than dread his call.

Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!  
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell  
(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,  
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear!  
Be death your theme in ev'ry place and hour;  
Nor longer want, ye monumental fires!  
A brother tomb to tell you you shall die.  
That death you dread (so great is nature's skill!)  
Know, you shall court, before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes, deep you sit;  
In wisdom, shallow: pompous ignorance!  
Would you be still more learned, than the learn'd?  
Learn well to know how much need not be known,  
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense,  
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,  
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field;  
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.  
You scorn what lies before you in the page  
Of nature, and experience, moral truth;  
Of indispenfable, eternal fruit;  
Fruit, on which mortals feeding, turn to gods:  
And dive in science for distinguish'd names,  
Dishonest fomentation of your pride;  
Sinking in virtue, as you rise in fame.  
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords  
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,  
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.  
Awake, ye curious indagators! fond  
Of knowing all, but what avails you, known.  
If you would learn death's character, attend.  
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,  
All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,

Together shook in his impartial urn,  
Come forth at random: or if choice is made,  
The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults  
All bold conjecture, and fond hopes of man.  
What countless multitudes, not only leave,  
But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!  
Tho' great our sorrow, greater our surprize.

Like other tyrants, death delights to smite,  
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of power,  
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,  
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;  
The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud;  
And weeping fathers build their childrens tomb;  
Me thine, Narcissa!—What tho' short thy date?  
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.  
That life is long, which answers life's great end.  
The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name;  
The man of wisdom is the man of years.  
In hoary youth Methuselems may die;  
O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs!

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far.

And can her gaiety give counsel too?

That, like the Jew's fam'd oracle of gems,  
Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,  
And opens more the character of death,

Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt:

Give death his due, the wretched, and the old;

Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave;

Let him not violate kind nature's laws,

But own man born to live, as well as die.'

Wretched and old thou giv'st him; young and gay  
He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.



What if I prove, 'The farthest from the fear,  
'Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?'

All, more than common, menaces an end.

A blaze betokens brevity of life:

As if bright embers should emit a flame,

Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,

And made youth younger, and taught life to live.

As nature's opposites wage endless war,

For this offence, as treason to the deep

Inviolate stupor of his reign,

Where lust, and turbulent ambition, sleep,

Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,

More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his pow'r.

But wherefore aggrandiz'd? by heav'n's decree,

To plant the soul on her eternal guard,

In awful expectation of our end,

Thus runs death's dread commission: 'Strike, but so,

'As most alarms the living by the dead.'

Hence stratagem delights him, and surprize,

And cruel sport with man's securities.

Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;

And, where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.

This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?

Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up

In deep dissimulation's darkest night.

Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,

Who travel under cover, death assumes

The name and look of life, and dwells among us.

He takes all shapes that serve his black designs:

Tho' master of a wider empire far

Than that, o'er which the Roman eagle flew;  
 Like Nero, he's a fidler, charioteer,  
 Or drives his phaeton, in female guise;  
 Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,  
 His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the form least like himself,  
 His slender self. Hence burly corpulence  
 Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.  
 Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,  
 Or ambush in a smile; or wanton dive  
 In dimples deep; loves eddies, which draw in  
 Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.  
 Such, on Narcissa's couch, he loiter'd long  
 Unknown; and, when detected, still was seen  
 To smile; such peace has innocence in death!

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive,  
 One eye on death, and one full-fix'd on heav'n,  
 Becomes a mortal, and immortal man.  
 Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy,  
 I've seen, or dreamt I saw, the tyrant dress;  
 Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.  
 Say, muse, for thou remember'st, call it back,  
 And shew Lorenzo the surprizing scene;  
 If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood.  
 Death would have enter'd; nature pusht him back;  
 Supported by a Doctor of renown,  
 His point he gain'd. Then artfully dismiss  
 The sage; for death design'd to be conceal'd.  
 He gave an old vivacious usurer  
 His meagre aspect, and his naked bones;  
 In gratitude for plumping up his prey,

A pamper'd spendthrift; whose fantastick air,  
Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,  
He took in change, and underneath the pride  
Of costly lincn, tuck'd his filthy shroud.  
His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane;  
And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipt,  
Out sallies on adventures. Ask you where?  
Where is he not? for his peculiar haunts,  
Let this suffice; sure as night follows day,  
Death treads in pleasure's footsteps round the world,  
When pleasure treads the paths, which reason shuns.  
When, against reason, riot shuts the door,  
And gaily supplies the place of sense,  
Then, foremost at the banquet, and the ball,  
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye;  
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.  
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,  
Inly he laughs, to see them laugh at him,  
As absent far: and when the revel burns,  
When fear is banish'd, and triumphant thought,  
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,  
Against him turns the key; and bids him sup  
With their progenitors--He drops his mask;  
Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprize,  
From his black masque of nitre, touch'd by fire,  
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.  
And is not this triumphant treachery,  
And more than simple conquest, in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul  
In soft security, because unknown

Life's modest joys we ruin, while we raise;  
And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace:  
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!  
Of fortune fond, as thoughtless of thy fate!  
As late I drew death's picture, to stir up  
Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see  
Gay fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.  
See, high in air, the sportive goddess hangs,  
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glitt'ring ware,  
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad  
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.  
All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends;  
Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,  
Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,  
(Still more ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r.

Gold glitters most, where virtue shines no more;  
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.

O what a precious pack of votaries  
Unkennell'd from the prisons, and the stews,  
Pour in, all op'ning in their idol's praise!  
All, ardent, eye each wasture of her hand,  
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,  
Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,  
Untasted, thro' mad appetite for more;  
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and rav'nous still.  
Voracious all, to trace the smallest game,  
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)  
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly,  
O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground,  
Drunk with the burning scent of place or power,  
Launch to the foot of Lore, till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark  
Their manners, thou their various fates survey.  
With aim mis-measur'd, and impetuous speed,  
Some darting, strike their ardent wish far off,  
'Thro' fury to possess it: some succeed,  
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.  
From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,  
And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.  
'To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off,  
'Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.  
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,  
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.  
Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,  
And rend abundance into poverty;  
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles:  
Smiles too the goddess; but smiles most at those,  
(Just victims of exorbitant desire!)  
Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd  
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.  
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain.  
'The number small, which happiness can bear.  
'Tho' various for a while their fates; at last  
One curse involves them all: at death's approach,  
All read their riches backward into loss,  
And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And death's approach (if orthodox my song)  
Is hasten'd by the lure of fortune's smiles.  
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?  
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?  
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;  
A blow, which, while it executes, alarms;  
And startles thousands with a single fall.



Which moment is commission'd to destroy?  
In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.  
Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fixt;  
Fixt as a centinel, all eye, all ear,  
All expectation of the coming foe.  
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear;  
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,  
And fate surprize thee nodding. Watch, be strong;  
Thus give each day the merit, and renown,  
Of dying well; tho' doom'd but once to die.  
Nor let life's period hidden (as from most)  
Hide too from thee the precious use of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate.  
Soon, not surprizing, death his visit paid.  
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,  
Nor gaiety forgot it was to die.  
Tho' fortune too (our third and final theme,)  
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,  
And ev'ry glitt'ring gewgaw, on her sight,  
To dazzle, and debauch it from its mark.  
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man;  
And ev'ry thought that misses it, is blind.  
Fortune, with youth and gaiety, conspir'd  
To weave a triple wreath of happiness  
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow.  
And could death charge thro' such a shining shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear.  
As if to damp our elevated aims,  
And strongly preach humility to man.  
O how portentous is prosperity!  
How, comet-like, it threatens, while it shines!  
Few years but yield us proof of death's ambition,

To cull his victims from the fairest fold,  
And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.  
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er  
With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,  
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,  
The gaudy centre, of the public eye,  
When fortune thus has toss'd her child in air,  
Snatcht from the covert of an humble state,  
How often have I seen him dropt at once,  
Our morning's envy! and our ev'ning's sigh!  
As if her bounties were the signal given,  
The flow'ry wreath to mark the sacrifice,  
And call death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

High fortune seems in cruel league with fate.  
Ask you for what? to give his war on man  
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;  
'Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.  
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime  
Of life? to hang his airy nest on high,  
On the slight timber of the topmost bough,  
Rockt at each breeze, and menacing a fall?  
Granting grim death at equal distance there;  
Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.  
What makes man wretched? Happiness deny'd?  
Lorenzo! no: 'tis happiness disdain'd.  
She comes too meanly drest to win our smile;  
And calls herself Content, a homely name!  
Our flame is transport, and content our scorn.  
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,  
And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;  
A tempest to warm transport near of kin.  
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,

As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,  
Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,  
The sun's defiance, and the flocks defence;  
By the strong strokes of lab'ring hinds subdu'd,  
Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,  
In cumb'rous ruin, thunders to the ground;  
The conscious forest trembles at the shock,  
And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.

These high-aim'd darts of death, and these alone,  
Should I collect, my quiver would be full.

A quiver, which, suspended in mid air,  
Or near heav'n's archer, in the zodiac, hung,  
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,  
The gaze and contemplation of mankind!

A constellation awful, yet benign,  
To guide the gay thro' life's tempestuous wave;  
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock,  
From greater danger to grow more secure,  
'And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate.'

Lyfander, happy past the common lot,  
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.  
He woo'd the fair Aspasia: she was kind;  
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blest:  
All who knew, envy'd; yet in envy lov'd:  
Can fancy form more finish'd happiness?

Fixt was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome  
Rose on the sounding beach. The glitt'ring spires  
Float in the wave, and break against the shore:

So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.  
The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave,  
To re-embrace in ecstasies, at eve.

The rising storm forbids. The news arrives:

Untold, she saw it in her servant's eye.  
She felt it seen (her heart was apt to feel;)  
And, drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,  
In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.  
Now, round the sumptuous, bridal monument,  
The guilty billows innocently roar;  
And the rough sailor passing drops a tear.  
A tear?—Can tears suffice?—But not for me.  
How vain our efforts! and our arts, how vain!  
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,  
Has thrown me on my fate—These dy'd together;  
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!  
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace—  
Narcissa! pity bleeds at thought of thee.  
Yet thou wast only near me; not myself.  
Survive myself?—That cures all other woe.  
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.  
O the soft commerce! O the tender ties,  
Close-twisted with the fibres of the heart!  
Which, broken, break them; and drain off the soul  
Of human joy; and make it pain to live—  
And is it then to live? when such friends part,  
'Tis the survivor dies—My heart! no more.

THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT THE SIXTH.

THE  
INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING  
THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE,  
OF  
IMMORTALITY.

PART THE FIRST.

Where, among other things, GLORY and RICHES are  
particularly considered.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED  
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
HENRY PELHAM,  
FIRST LORD COMMISSIONER OF THE TREASURY AND  
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.



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## P R E F A C E.



F EW ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question. Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shewn) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal; it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawaken'd in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity; how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

SENSIBLE appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience

of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest, that souls should not survive! The heathen world confessed, that they rather hoped, than firmly believed immortality; and how many heathens have we still among us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel: but by how many is the gospel rejected, or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded, that most, if not all, our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error, by some doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive, that a man fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly, and impartially, inquire after the surest means of escaping one, and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

HERE, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments, which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all, who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall, here, occur, which others have declined, they are sub-

mitted, with all deference, to better judgments in this, of all points, the most important. For, as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only; viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must ever be indisputable. And, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity; which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

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THE  
COMPLAINT.

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NIGHT THE SIXTH.

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SHE \* (for I know not yet her name in heaven)  
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene;  
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?  
This seeming mitigation but inflames;  
This fancy'd med'cine heightens the disease.  
The longer known, the closer still she grew;  
And gradual parting, is a gradual death.  
Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts  
By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,  
From hardest hearts, confession of distress.

O the long, dark approach thro' years of pain,  
Death's gall'ry! (might I dare to call it so)  
With dismal doubt, and fable terror, hung;  
Sick hope's pale lamp, its only glimm'ring ray:  
There, fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,  
Forbid self-love itself to flatter, there.  
How oft I gaz'd, prophetically sad!  
How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!  
In smiles she sunk her grief, to lessen mine.  
She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.

\* Referring to Night the Fifth.

Like pow'rful armies trenching at a town,  
 By flow, and silent, but resistless sap,  
 In his pale progress gently gaining ground,  
 Death urg'd his deadly siege; in spite of art,  
 Of all the balmy blessings nature lends  
 To succour frail humanity. Ye stars!  
 (Not now first made familiar to my sight)  
 And thou, O moon! bear witness; many a night  
 He tore the pillow from beneath my head,  
 Ty'd down my sore attention to the shock,  
 By ceaseless depredations on a life  
 Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post  
 Of observation! darker ev'ry hour!  
 Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,  
 And pointed at eternity below;  
 When my soul shudder'd at futurity;  
 When, on a moment's point, th' important dye  
 Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,  
 And turn'd up life; my title to more woe.

But why more woe? more comfort let it be.  
 Nothing is dead, but that which wish'd to die;  
 Nothing is dead, but wretchedness and pain;  
 Nothing is dead, but what incumber'd, gall'd,  
 Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.  
 Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wife?  
 Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars  
 Too low to reach it; death, great death alone,  
 O'er stars and sun, triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our transition; tho' the mind,  
 An artist at creating self-alarms,  
 Rich in expedients for inquietude,  
 Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take

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Death's portrait true? the tyrant never fat.  
 Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;  
 Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.  
 Death, and his image rising in the brain,  
 Bear faint resemblance; never are alike;  
 Fear shakes the pencil; fancy loves excess,  
 Dark ignorance is lavish of her shades:  
 And these the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst; 'tis past: new prospects rise;  
 And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.  
 Far other views our contemplation claim,  
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;  
 Views that suspend our agonies in death,  
 Wrapt in the thought of immortality,  
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!  
 Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on;  
 And find the soul unfated with her theme.  
 Its nature, proof, importance, fire my song.  
 O that my song could emulate my soul!  
 Like her, immortal. No!—the soul disdains  
 A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames;  
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,  
 Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire.

Thy nature, Immortality! who knows?  
 And yet who knows it not? it is but life  
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,  
 And spun for ever; dipt by cruel fate  
 In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle here!  
 How short our correspondence with the sun!  
 And while it lasts, inglorious! Our best deeds,  
 How wanting in their weight! our highest joys  
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,

And give us strength to suffer. But how great  
 To mingle int'rests, converse, amities,  
 With all the sons of reason, scatter'd wide  
 Through habitable space, where-ever born,  
 Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens  
 Of universal nature! to lay hold  
 By more than feeble faith on the Supreme!  
 To call heav'n's rich unfathomable mines  
 (Mines, which support archangels in their state)  
 Our own! to rise in science, as in bliss,  
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies!  
 To read creation; read its mighty plan  
 In the bare bosom of the Deity!  
 The plan, and execution, to collate!  
 To see, before each glance of piercing thought,  
 All cloud, all shadow, blown remote; and leave  
 No mystery—but that of love divine,  
 Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,  
 From earth's Aceldama, this field of blood,  
 Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,  
 From darkness, and from dust, to such a scene!  
 Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!  
 From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!  
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate!  
 Blest absolution of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo, these are thoughts that make man man,  
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.  
 How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,  
 And ev'ry moment fear to sink beneath  
 The clod we tread; soon trodden by our sons)  
 How great, in the wild whirl of time's pursuits,  
 To stop, and pause, involv'd in high preface,

Through the long vista of a thousand years,  
To stand contemplating our distant selves,  
As in magnifying mirror seen,  
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!  
To prophesy our own futurities!  
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!  
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys  
As far beyond conception, as desert,  
Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers, and the tale!

Lorenzo, swells thy bosom at the thought?  
The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.  
Revere thyself;—and yet thyself despise.  
His nature no man can o'er-rate; and none  
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed,  
Nor there be modest, where thou shouldst be proud;  
That almost universal error shun.

How just our pride, when we behold those heights!  
Not those ambition paints in air, but those  
Reason points out, and ardent virtue gains;  
And angels emulate; our pride how just!  
When mount we? when the shackles cast? when quit  
This cell of the creation? this small nest,  
Stuck in a corner of the universe,  
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud, and fine-spun air?  
Fine spun to sense; but gross and feculent  
To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breath  
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;  
Greatly triumphant on time's farther shore,  
Where virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears;  
While pomp imperial begs an alms of peace.  
In empire high, or in proud science deep,  
Ye horn of earth! on what can you confer,



With half the dignity, with half the gain,  
The gulf, the glow of rational delight,  
As on this theme, which angels praise and share?  
Man's fates and favours are a theme in heav'n.

What wretched repetition cloy's us here!  
What periodic potions for the sick!  
Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'd minds!  
In an eternity, what scenes shall strike!  
Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!  
What webs of wonder shall unravel, there!  
What full day pour on all the paths of heaven,  
And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep!  
How shall the blessed day of our discharge  
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of fate,  
And straiten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man  
To know; how rich, how full, our banquet there!  
There, not the moral world alone unfolds;  
The world material, lately seen in shades,  
And, in those shades, by fragments only seen,  
And seen those fragments by the lab'ring eye,  
Unbroken, then, illustrious, and entire,  
Its ample sphere, its universal frame,  
In full dimensions, swells to the survey;  
And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.  
From some superior point (where, who can tell?  
Suffice it, 'tis a point where gods reside)  
How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,  
In the vast ocean of unbounded space,  
Behold an infinite of floating worlds  
Divide the crystal wave of ether pure,  
In endless voyage, without port? The least

Of these disseminated orbs, how great!  
 Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,  
 Huge, as leviathan, to that small race,  
 Those twinkling multitudes of little life,  
 He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these!  
 Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?  
 As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;  
 As circulating globules in our veins;  
 So vast the plan: fecundity divine!  
 Exub'rant source! perhaps, I wrong thee still,  
 If admiration is a source of joy,  
 What transport hence! yet the least in heaven,  
 What this to that illustrious robe He wears,  
 Who tost this mass of wonders from his hand,  
 A specimen, an earnest, of his power?  
 'Tis, to that glory, whence all glory flows,  
 As the mead's meanest flow'ret to the sun,  
 Which gave it birth. But what, this sun of heav'n?  
 This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?  
 Death, only death, the question can resolve.  
 By death, cheap-bought the ideas of our joy;  
 The bare ideas! solid happiness  
 So distant from its shadow, chas'd below.

And chase we still the phantom through the fire,  
 O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?  
 And toil we still for sublunary pay?  
 Defy the dangers of the field and flood,  
 Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,  
 Our more than vitals spin (if no regard  
 To great futurity) in curious webs  
 Of subtle thought, and exquisite design;  
 (Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly!

The momentary buz of vain renown!

A name! a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air,  
For fordid lucre plunge we in the mire?  
Drudge, sweat, through ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,  
For vile contaminating trash; throw up  
Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man?  
And deify the dirt, matur'd to gold?  
Ambition, avarice; the two daemons these,  
Which goad through ev'ry slough our human herd,  
Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.  
How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!  
'These daemons burn mankind; but most possess  
Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide eternity?

And why not in an atom on the shore,  
To cover ocean? or a mote, the sun?  
Glory and wealth! have they this blinding power?  
What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?  
Would it surprize thee? Be thou then surpriz'd;  
Thou neither know'st: their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,  
What close connexion ties them to my theme.  
First, what is true ambition? The pursuit  
Of glory, nothing less than man can share.  
Were they as vain, as gaudy-minded man,  
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,  
Their arts and conquests animals might boast,  
And claim their laurel crowns as well as we;  
But not celestial. Here we stand alone;  
As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent  
If prone in thought, our stature is our shame;

And man should blush, his forehead meets the skies.  
The visible and present are for brutes,  
A slender portion! and a narrow bound!  
These reason, with an energy divine,  
O'erleaps; and claims the future and unseen;  
The vast unseen! the future fathomless!  
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,  
Leaving gross nature's sediments below,  
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits  
The sage and hero of the fields and woods,  
Asserts his rank, and rises into man.  
This is ambition, this is human fire.

Can parts or place (two bold pretenders!) make  
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?

Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,  
Our boast but ill deserve. A feeble aid!  
Dedalian engin'ry! if these alone  
Assist our flight, fame's flight is glory's fall.  
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,  
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.  
A celebrated wretch when I behold,  
When I behold a genius bright, and base,  
Of tow'ring talents, and terrestrial aims;  
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,  
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,  
With rubbish mix'd, and glitt'ring in the dust.  
Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,  
At once compassion soft, and envy, rise——  
But wherefore envy? talents angels-bright,  
If wanting worth, are shining instruments  
In false ambition's hand, to finish faults  
Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Great ill is an atchievement of great pow'rs.  
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.  
Reason the means, affections chuse our end;  
Means have no merit, if our ends amiss.  
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain;  
What is a Pelham's head, to Pelham's heart?  
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.  
Right ends, and means, make wisdom: worldly wise  
Is but half-witted, at its highest praise.

Let genius then despair to make thee great:  
Nor flatter station: what is station high?  
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts, and begs;  
It begs an alms of homag; from the throng,  
And oft the throng denies its charity.  
Monarchs, and ministers, are awful names;  
Whoever wears them, challenge our devoir.  
Religion, public order, both exact  
External homage, and a supple knee,  
To beings pompously set up, to serve  
The meanest slave; all more is merit's due,  
Her sacred and inviolable right;  
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.  
Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth;  
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.  
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,  
And vote the mantle into majesty.  
Let the small savage boast his silver fur;  
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,  
His own, descending fairly from his fires,  
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,  
And souls in ermin scorn a soul without?  
Can place or lessen us, or aggrandize?



Pygmies are Pygmies still, thought perch'd on Alps;  
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.  
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself;  
Virtue alone out-builds the pyramids;  
Her monuments shall last, when Egypt's fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?

The cause is lodg'd in immortality.

Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for pow'r;  
What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;

'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?

Then thou before wast something less than man.

Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride?

That treach'rous pride betrays thy dignity;

That pride defames humanity, and calls

The being mean, which staffs or strings can raise.

That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,

From blindness bold, and tow'ring to the skies.

'Tis born of ignorance, which knows not man;

An angel's second; nor his second, long.

A Nero quitting his imperial throne,

And courting glory from the tinkling string,

But faintly shadows an immortal soul,

With empire's self, to pride, or rapture fir'd.

If nobler motives minister no cure,

Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place: 'tis more;

It makes the post stand candidate for thee;

Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;

Though no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;

And though it wears no ribband, 'tis renown;

Renown, that would not quit thee, though disgrac'd,

Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.

Other ambition nature interdicts;  
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,  
By pointing at his origin, and end;  
Milk, and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;  
His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone;  
To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing  
Of just ambition, to the grand result,  
The curtain's fall; there, see the buskin'd chief  
Unshod behind this momentary scene;  
Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,  
As vice, or virtue, sinks him, or sublimes;  
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,  
This antic prelude of grotesque events,  
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray  
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,  
And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice  
To Christian pride! which had with horror shockt  
The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou most Christian enemy to peace!  
Again in arms? again provoking fate?  
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,  
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheaths;  
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,  
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why this so rare? because forgot of all  
The day of death; that venerable day,  
Which sits as judge; that day, which shall pronounce  
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.  
Lorenzo, never shut thy thought against it  
Be leeces ne'er so full, afford it room,  
And give it audience in the cabinet.

That friend consulted, flatteries apart,  
Will tell thee fair, if thou art great, or mean.

To doat on aught may leave us, or be left,  
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,  
Point to the centre their inverted spires,  
And learn humiliation from a soul,  
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.  
Yet these are they, the world pronounces wise;  
The world, which cancels nature's right and wrong,  
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends  
His solemn face, to countenance the coin.  
Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.  
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave  
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,  
The most ambitious, unambitious, mean;  
In triumph, mean; and abject, on a throne.  
Nothing can make it less than mad in man,  
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,  
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,  
But reaching him, who gave her wings to fly.  
When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,  
And downward pores, for that which shines above,  
Substantial happiness, and true renown;  
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,  
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;  
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! pow'rful source of good and ill!  
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,  
When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease,  
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies;  
By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,  
It turns a curse; it is our chain, and scourge,

In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lye,  
Close-grated by the fordid bars of sense;  
All prospect of eternity shut out;  
And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

With error in ambition justly charg'd,  
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth?  
What if thy rental I reform? and draw  
An inventory new to set thee right?  
Where, thy true treasure? Gold says, 'not in me;  
And, 'not in me,' the di'mond. Gold is poor;  
India's insolvent: seek it in thyself,  
Seek in thy naked self, and find it there;  
In being so descended, form'd, endow'd;  
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!  
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!  
In senses, which inherit earth, and heav'n's;  
Enjoy the various riches nature yields;  
Far nobler; give the riches they enjoy;  
Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;  
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire:  
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,  
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,  
And half create the wond'rous world they see,  
Our senses, as our reason, are divine.  
But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,  
Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos still.  
Objects are but th' occasion; ours th' exploit;  
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,  
Which nature's admirable picture draws;  
And beautifies creation's ample dome.  
Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,  
Man makes the matchless image, man admires.

Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,  
Superior wonders in himself forgot,  
His admiration waste on objects round,  
When heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees?  
Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth  
In fancy, fir'd to form a fairer scene  
Than sense surveys! in mem'ry's firm record,  
Which, should it perish, could this world recall  
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!  
In colours fresh, originally bright  
Preserves its portrait, and report its fate!  
What wealth in intellect, that sov'reign pow'r!  
Which sense, and fancy, summons to the bar;  
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;  
And from the mass those underlings import,  
From their materials sifted, and refin'd,  
And in truth's balance, accurately weigh'd,  
Forms art, and science, government, and law;  
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,  
The vitals, and the grace of civil life!  
And manners (sad exception!) set aside,  
Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair  
Of his idea, whose indulgent thought,  
Long, long, ere chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,  
Disdaining limit, or from place, or time;  
And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear  
The almighty *fiat*, and the trumpet's sound!  
Bold, on creation's outside walk, and view  
What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;  
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,



Creation's new in fancy's field to rise!  
 Souls, that can grasp whate'er th'Almighty made,  
 And wander wild thro' things impossible!  
 What wealth, in faculties of endless growth,  
 In quenchless passions violent to crave,  
 In liberty to chuse, in pow'r to reach,  
 And in duration (how thy riches rise!)  
 Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!

Ask you, what pow'r resides in feeble man  
 'That bliss to gain? Is virtue's, then, unknown?  
 Virtue, our present peace, our future prize.  
 Man's unprecious, natural estate,  
 Improveable at will, in virtue lies;  
 Its tenure sure; its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?  
 To breed new wants, and beggar us the more;  
 Then, make a richer scramble for the throng?  
 Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long  
 Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,  
 Like rubbish from dislodging engines thrown,  
 Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;  
 Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes;  
 New masters court, and call the former fool  
 (How justly!) for dependence on their stay.  
 Wide scatter, first, our play-things; then, our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?  
 Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme:  
 Riches enable to be richer still;  
 And, richer still, what mortal can resist?  
 'Thus wealth (a cruel task-master!) injoins  
 New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train!  
 And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.

The poor are half as wretched, as the rich;  
Whose proud and painful privilege it is,  
At once, to bear a double load of woe;  
To feel the stings of envy, and of want,  
Outrageous want! both Indies cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content.

Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease;  
Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness.

A competence is all we can enjoy.

O be content, where heav'n can give no more!

More, like a flash of water from a lock,

Quickens our spirit's movements for an hour;

But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys

Above our native temper's common stream.

Hence disappointment lurks in ev'ry prize,

As bees in flow'rs; and stings us with success.

'The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns;

Nor knows the wife are privy to the lie.

Much learning shews how little mortals know;

Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:

At best, it babies us with endless toys,

And keeps us children till we drop to dust.

As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,

They fail to find, what they so plainly see:

Thus men, in shining riches, see the face

Of happiness, nor know it is a shade;

But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again;

And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!

Who lives to nature, rarely can be poor;

Who lives to fancy, never can be rich.

Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,

In debt to fortune, trembles at her pow'r.  
 The man of reason smiles at her, and death.  
 O what a patrimony this! a being  
 Of such inherent strength and majesty,  
 Not worlds possess can raise it; worlds destroy'd  
 Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course,  
 When thine, O nature! ends; too blest to mourn  
 Creation's obsequies. What treasure, this!  
 The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal! ages past, yet nothing gone!  
 Morn without eve! a race without a goal!  
 Unshorten'd by progression infinite!  
 Futurity for ever future! life  
 Beginning still, where computation ends!  
 'Tis the description of a Deity!  
 'Tis the description of the meanest slave:  
 The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn?  
 The meanest slave thy sov'reign glory shares.  
 Proud youth! fastidious of the lower world!  
 Man's lawful pride includes humility;  
 Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find  
 Inferiors; all immortal! brothers all!  
 Proprietors eternal of thy love.

IMMORTAL! what can strike the sense so strong;  
 'As this the soul? It thunders to the thought;  
 Reason amazes; gratitude o'erwhelms;  
 No more we slumber on the brink of fate;  
 Rous'd at the sound, th' exulting soul ascends,  
 And breathes her native air; an air that feeds  
 Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;  
 Quick-kindles all that is divine within us;  
 Nor leaves one loit'ring thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame  
Immortal! were but one immortal, how  
Would others envy! how would thrones adore!  
Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost  
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heav'n!  
O vain, vain, vain! all else! eternity!  
A glorious, and a needful refuge, that,  
From vile imprisonment, in abject views.  
'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,  
'Anid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,  
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill.  
That only, and that amply, this performs;  
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;  
Their terror those; and these their lustre lose;  
Eternity depending covers all;  
Eternity depending all achieves;  
Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;  
Blends her distinction; abrogates her pow'rs;  
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,  
Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,  
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,  
The man beneath; if I may call him man,  
Whom immortality's full force inspires.  
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;  
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,  
By minds quite conscious of their high descent,  
Their present province, and their future prize;  
Divinely darting upward ev'ry wish,  
Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost.  
Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?  
If earth's whole orb, by some due-distanc'd eye  
Were seen at once, her tow'ring Alps would sink,

And level'd Atlas leave an even sphere.  
 Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,  
 Is swallow'd in eternity's vast round.  
 To that stupendous view, when souls awake,  
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,  
 Time's toys subside; and equal all below.

Enthusiastic, this? then all are weak,  
 But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height  
 Some souls have soar'd; or martyrs ne'er had bled.  
 And all may do, what has by man been done.  
 Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,  
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,  
 Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?  
 What slave unblest, who from to-morrow's dawn  
 Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,  
 And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!  
 Her own immense appointments to compute,  
 Or comprehend her high prerogatives,  
 In this her dark minority, how toils,  
 How vainly pants, the human soul divine!  
 Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy:  
 What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the muse has sung,  
 Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!  
 Are there who wrap the world so close about them,  
 They see no farther than the clouds; and dance  
 On heedless vanity's phantastic toe,  
 Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,  
 Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?  
 Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?  
 Are there on earth (let me not call them men)



Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts;  
 Unconscious as the mountain of its ore;  
 Or rock, of its inestimable gem?  
 When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these  
 Shall know their treasure; treasure, then, no more.

Are there (still more amazing!) who resist  
 The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,  
 The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?  
 Who thro' this bosom-barrier burst their way?  
 And, with reverse ambition, strive to sink:  
 Who labour downwards thro' th' opposing powers  
 Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,  
 To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock  
 Of endless night? night darker than the grave's?  
 Who fight the proofs of immortality?  
 With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,  
 Work all their engines, level their black fires,  
 To blot from man this attribute divine,  
 (Than vital blood far dearer to the wife)  
 Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves?

To contradict them, see all nature rise!  
 What object, what event, the moon beneath,  
 But argues, or endears, an after-scene?  
 To reason proves, or weds it to desire?  
 All things proclaim it needful; some advance  
 One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.  
 A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,  
 From heav'n, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,  
 By nature, as her common habit, worn;  
 So pressing providence a truth to teach,  
 Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,

Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms  
 Creation, and holds empire far beyond!  
 Eternity's inhabitant august!  
 Of two eternities amazing Lord!  
 One past, ere man's, or angel's, had begun;  
 Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault,  
 Thy glorious immortality in man:  
 A theme for ever, and for all; of weight,  
 Of moment infinite! but relish'd most  
 By those who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth  
 Of thee the great immutable, to man  
 Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;  
 And he who most consults her, is most wise.  
 Lorenzo, to this heav'nly Delphos haste;  
 And come back all-immortal; all divine:  
 Look nature through, 'tis revolution all;  
 All change, no death. Day follows night; and night  
 The dying day; stars rise, and set, and rise;  
 Earth takes th' example. See, the summer gay,  
 With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flowers,  
 Droops into pallid autumn: winter grey,  
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
 Blows autumn, and his golden fruits, away:  
 Then melts into the spring: soft spring, with breath  
 Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,  
 Recalls the first. All, to re-flourish, fades.  
 As in a wheel, all sinks to re-ascend.  
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,  
 Nature revolves, but man advances; both  
 Eternal, that a circle, this a line.

That gravitates, this soars. Th' aspiring soul  
 Ardent, and tremulous, like flame, ascends;  
 Zeal, and humility, her wings to heav'n.  
 The world of matter, with its various forms,  
 All dies into new life. Life born from death  
 Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.  
 No single atom, once in being, lost,  
 With change of counsel charges the Most High.

What hence infers Lorenzo? Can it be?  
 Matter immortal? and shall spirit die?  
 Above the nobler, shall less noble rise?  
 Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,  
 No resurrection know? shall man alone,  
 Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,  
 Less privileg'd than grain, on which he feeds?  
 Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize  
 The bliss of being, or with previous pain  
 Deplore its period, by the spleen of fate,  
 Severely doom'd death's single unredeem'd?

If nature's revolution speaks aloud,  
 In her gradation, hear her louder still.  
 Look nature thro', 'tis neat gradation all.  
 By what minute degrees her scale ascends?  
 Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,  
 To that above it join'd, to that beneath.  
 Parts, into parts reciprocally shot,  
 Abhor divorce: what love of union reigns!  
 Here, dormant matter waits a call to life;  
 Half-life, half-death, join there; here, life and sense;  
 There, sense from reason steals a glimm'ring ray;  
 Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd  
 The chain unbroken upward, to the realms

Of incorporeal life? those realms of bliss,  
 Where death has no dominion? Grant a make  
 Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy, part;  
 And part ethereal; grant the soul of man  
 Eternal; or in man the series ends.

Wide yawns the gap: connexion is no more;  
 Checkt reason halts; her next step wants support;  
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme;  
 A scheme, analogy pronounc'd so true;  
 Analogy, man's surest guide below.

Thus far, all nature calls on thy belief.  
 And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,  
 False attestation on all nature charge,  
 Rather than violate his league with death?  
 Renounce his reason, rather than renounce  
 The dust below'd, and run the risk of heav'n?  
 O what indignity to deathless souls!  
 What treason to the majesty of man!  
 Of man immortal! hear the lofty style:  
 ' If so decreed, th'Almighty Will be done.  
 ' Let earth dissolve, yon pond'rous orbs descend,  
 ' And grind us into dust: the soul is safe;  
 ' The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,  
 ' As tow'ring flame from nature's fun'ral pyre;  
 ' O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;  
 ' His charter, his inviolable rights,  
 ' Well-pleas'd to learn from thunder's impotence,  
 ' Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms.'

But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!  
 The glories of the world, thy sev'nfold shield.  
 Other ambition than of crowns in air,  
 And superlunary felicities,

Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can;  
And turn those glories that inchant, against thee.  
What ties thee to this life, proclaims the next.  
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.

Come, my ambitious! let us mount together!  
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse;)  
And from the clouds, where pride delights to dwell,  
Look down on earth.—What seest thou? Wond'rous things!  
Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies.  
What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded seas!  
Loaded by man, for pleasure, wealth, or war!  
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,  
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.  
Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand;  
What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!  
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,  
And gild our landscape with their glitt'ring spires.  
Some 'mid the wond'ring waves majestic rise;  
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.  
Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)  
See, wide dominions ravish'd from the deep!  
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.  
Or southward turn; to delicate, and grand,  
The finer arts there ripen in the sun.  
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,  
Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch  
Shews us half-heav'n beneath its ample bend.  
High thro' mid air, here, streams are taught to flow;  
Whole rivers, there, laid by in basons, sleep.  
Here, plains turn oceans; there, vast oceans join  
Thro' kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to shore;  
And chang'd creation takes its face from man.



Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,  
 Where fame and empire wait upon the sword?  
 See fields in blood; hear naval thunders rise;  
 Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.  
 How yon enormous mole projecting breaks  
 'The mid-sea, furious waves! their roar amidst,  
 Out-speaks the Deity, and says, 'O main!  
 'Thus far, nor farther; new restraints obey.'  
 Earth's disembowel'd! measur'd are the skies!  
 Stars are detected in their deep recess!  
 Creation widens! vanquish'd nature yields!  
 Her secrets are extorted! art prevails;  
 What monument of genius, spirit, power!

And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this scence,  
 Whose glories render heaven superfluous! say,  
 Whose footsteps these?—Immortals have been here.  
 Could less than souls immortal this have done?  
 Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal;  
 And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess,  
 These are ambition's works: and these are great:  
 But this, the least immortal souls can do;  
 Transcend them all—But what can these transcend?  
 Dost ask me, what?—One sigh for the distressed.  
 What then for infidels? A deeper sigh.  
 'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man:  
 How little they, who think aught great below?  
 All our ambitions death defeats, but one;  
 And that it crowns.—Here cease we: but, ere long,  
 More pow'rful proof shall take the field against thee,  
 Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

